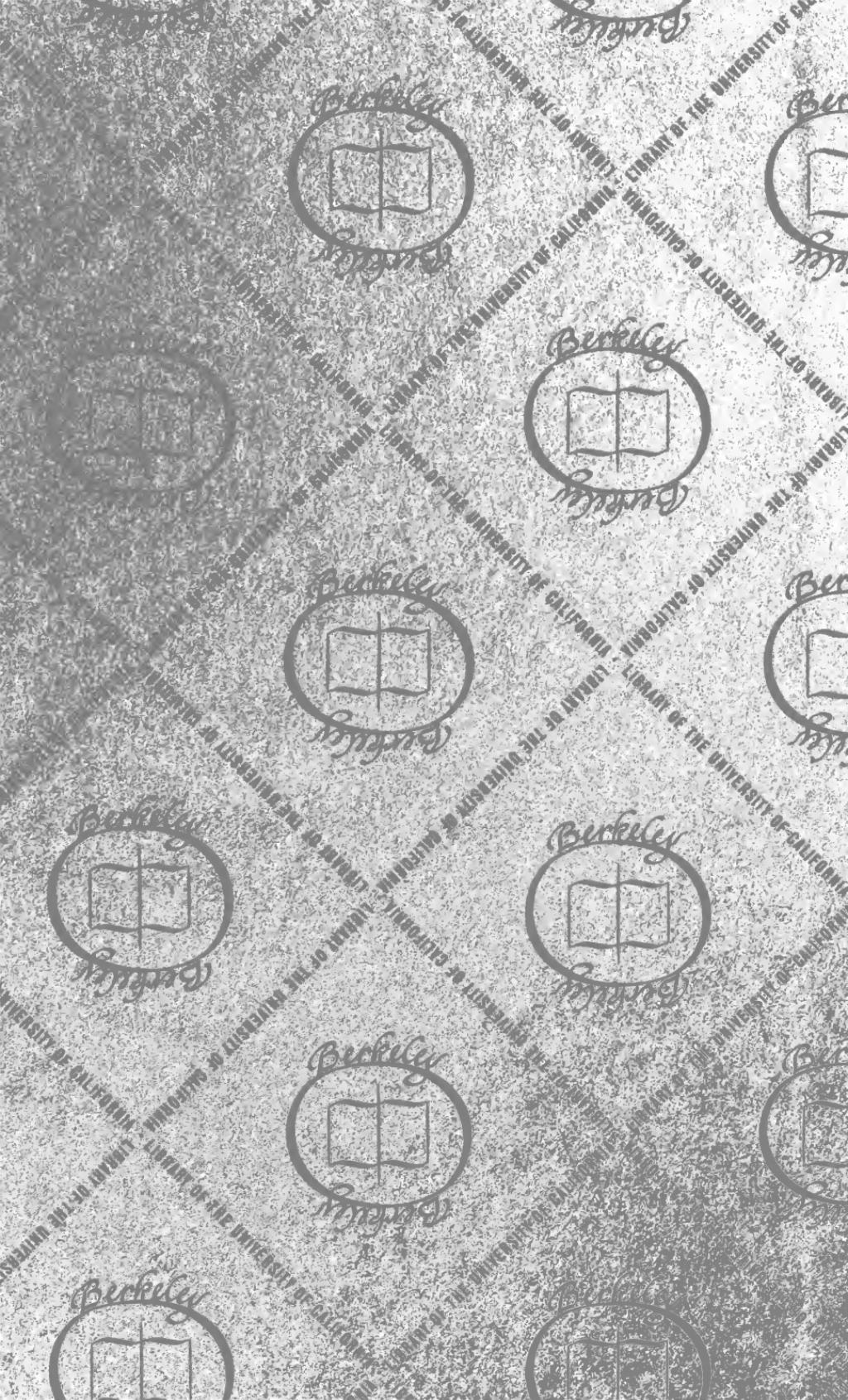


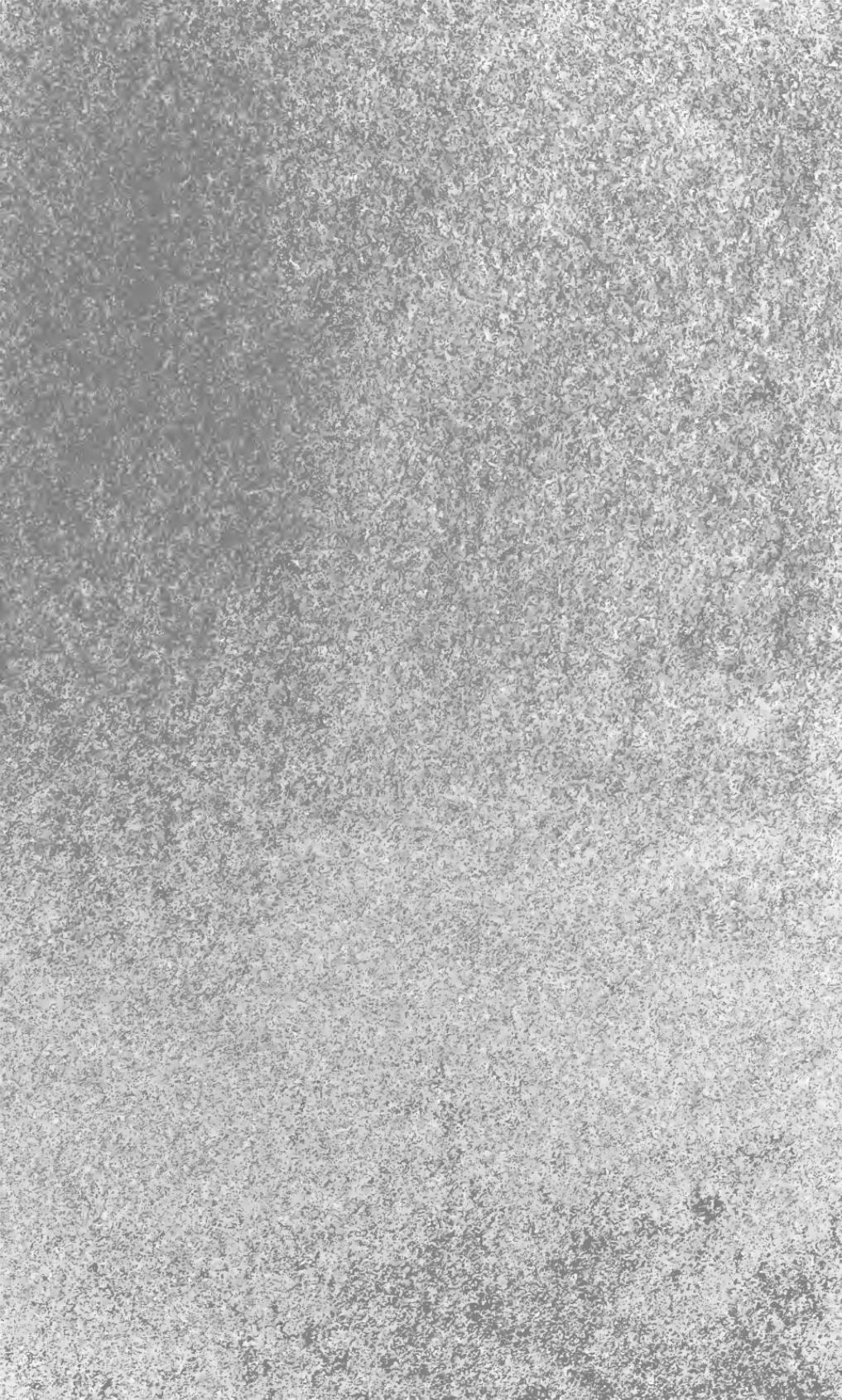
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# THE CONCEPTION OF AUTHORITY IN THE PAULINE WRITINGS

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY  
OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND LITERATURE  
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
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GRADUATE DIVINITY SCHOOL

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BY

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## INTRODUCTION

### IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

There is no more important subject in the field of religious thought than the one which relates to authority. This subject is important because of its bearing on the interpretation of religion. The conception which one has of authority determines to a marked degree what religion means to him, and when the basis of his religious authority is shifted his idea of religion must be readjusted. Authority might be defined as "that which is or may be appealed to in support of action or opinion,"<sup>1</sup> and according to that definition, religious authority is that which is or may be appealed to in support of action or opinion in matters pertaining to religion.

In determining what shall be the basis of our own religious authority, it is necessary to study the subject in the light of its historical development, and to do this, we must begin with a careful and critical examination of the position of the New Testament writers, and of Paul in particular. While Jesus was the founder of Christianity it was Paul who led in the organization of the church, and because of his writings, he has exerted a tremendous influence on the thinking of all the succeeding centuries. A study of Paul's conception of authority is interesting, not merely from a historical point of view, but also because it helps us in our effort to find a vital basis for our religion.

### WRITINGS ACCEPTED AS PAULINE

Fortunately for us several of Paul's writings have been preserved, and by means of these we are able to form a fairly accurate opinion of what his thought was. In this discussion the following writings will be used as the ones which express Paul's thought: I Thessalonians, Galatians, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Romans, Philippians and Philemon. These will be used because the scholarship of our day is almost universally agreed that they are Pauline. There is a tendency at the present time to take a more conservative position than was commonly held a decade ago on the Pauline authorship of the entire group of letters which bears his name. There are thirteen letters to which the name of Paul is attached, but the genuineness of some of these has been questioned by prominent scholars. Some writers have regarded all these letters as spurious and have insisted that they belong

<sup>1</sup> See *New Standard Dictionary*.

to a later time. There is little ground, however, for such a position and most scholars do not take seriously the contentions of those who hold to it. The weight of scholarship for the genuineness of the group named above is so overwhelming that they can be accepted, without further discussion, as the basis of this treatise.

The Pastoral Epistles undoubtedly contain much Pauline material, but it is now conceded by the majority of New Testament scholars that in their present form they are not Pauline.<sup>2</sup> Many still question the Pauline authorship of Colossians, although there is a growing tendency in favor of its genuineness.<sup>3</sup> A larger number doubt the Pauline authorship of Ephesians and II Thessalonians, although some who had formerly rejected these books are now writing in their defense.<sup>4</sup> These letters, the Pauline authorship of which has been questioned by many, may well be neglected in this discussion, and no great loss will be sustained as there is little additional material which they would contribute.

#### *Significance of Paul's Writings for a Study of his Conception of Authority*

The material furnished by Paul's letters is well adapted to a study of his conception of authority, as these letters were written to meet specific needs in the churches, and these needs called for definite and positive statements. There were controversies over matters of faith and conduct, and Paul sought to settle these. He had been asked definite questions pertaining to the Christian life, and he answered these and gave his reasons for answering them as he did. While Paul did not directly discuss the problem of authority in any of his letters, yet his own conception of authority is reflected in each of them. He did not write as a theologian to give the church a systematic statement of doctrine; but being first of all a missionary, he wrote for a missionary purpose. His letters were occasioned by real situations, and they were based upon experience, and a brief statement of the cir-

<sup>2</sup> For a brief statement of some of the most prominent writers see James Moffatt, *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, 1911, pp. 414 ff.

<sup>3</sup> For a concise statement of the position of scholarship see James Moffatt, *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, 1911, pp. 153 ff.

<sup>4</sup> James Moffatt thinks Ephesians was probably "a catholicized version of Colossians, written in Paul's name to Gentile Christendom (*Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, 1911, p. 393), but in regard to II Thessalonians he says: "For all the difficulties of the epistle, it is fair to say that almost every one of the features which seem to portray another physiognomy from that of Paul, can be explained, without straining the evidence, upon the hypothesis that he wrote the epistle himself" (*Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament*, 1911, p. 79).

cumstances which produced them will reveal their practical character and will also prepare the way for the further discussion.

### *I Thessalonians*

Paul left Thessalonica under circumstances which made him anxious about the welfare of the Christian community which he had gathered together in that city. This anxiety prompted him to send Timothy from Athens back to Thessalonica while he himself went on to Corinth (I Thess. 3:1 ff.). Timothy joined Paul at Corinth, and it appears that he reported that although the Thessalonians were being persecuted, they had remained true to the faith and were loyal to Paul. He also reported that some of them were troubled about the fate of those of their number who had died. In the light of this report Paul wrote his letter, and it is a practical discussion of these problems.

### *Galatians*

The question whether Galatians was intended for the small district which was the ancient kingdom of Galatia, or for the larger group of churches in the Roman province of Galatia, is not vital in this discussion, as the circumstances which led Paul to write it would be the same in either case. Judaizers had followed Paul and had taught his Gentile converts that it was necessary for them to keep the law in order to be saved. They taught that faith in Christ was not sufficient, for in addition to that, the Jewish rites and ceremonies must be kept. Many of the Galatians were disturbed and even carried away by this teaching, and the church was in confusion. Paul wrote the epistle to win them back and establish them in the true faith, and because of the circumstances, he was very definite in his statements.

### *The Corinthian Letters*

There has been much discussion over the number of letters which Paul wrote to Corinth, and over the component parts of II Corinthians. It is evident that he wrote a letter to this church before the one which is designated as I Corinthians (see I Cor. 5:9 ff.), and it is quite probable that II Corinthians is a compilation of at least two letters. But inasmuch as I Corinthians and II Corinthians are almost universally accepted as letters, or compilation of letters, written by Paul to the church at Corinth, any further discussion of the relation between these documents would not be germane to this treatise.

Paul was probably in Ephesus when he was informed by "them of Chloe" (I Cor. 1:11) concerning the condition of the church in Corinth. It was reported that there were divisions among the Christians, and that there was fornication in the church. It was stated that Christians carried their difficulties into the courts, and that there was a general tendency to immorality. Paul had also received a letter from the church (I Cor. 7:1), and it is quite likely that this letter was brought by Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus (I Cor. 16:17). It is apparent that this letter contained a number of questions which troubled the Christians at Corinth. They asked him about various phases of the marriage relation: whether it was advisable for a Christian to marry, and if he should marry whether he was permitted to select a heathen for his companion; what should be the Christian's attitude towards sexual relations, divorce, the marrying of virgins, and the remarriage of widows. They undoubtedly asked him concerning the eating of meats which had been sacrificed to idols, and the conduct of their worship, especially as it related to spiritual gifts. It is quite probable that they also asked him about the resurrection of the dead, and the collection for the poor at Jerusalem. Perhaps the three messengers confirmed the statement made by "them of Chloe" concerning the evils, and also explained the circumstances which gave rise to the questions contained in the letter. Paul wrote I Corinthians to correct these evils and to answer the practical questions put to him.

What is contained in our II Corinthians was written to meet the situation which developed after the reception of I Corinthians. These letters are especially valuable for the study of Paul's conception of authority, for they were written to help to solve specific problems and to answer definite questions, and he expressed himself in unmistakable language.

### *Romans*

It is not necessary, in this connection, to discuss the original destination of the last chapter of Romans, as it contains but little that would throw any light on the subject under consideration. Paul was in Corinth, and as he had preached the gospel in all the great centers of the eastern part of the Roman Empire, he was thinking about going to the West in search of new territory. His plan was to go to Spain after making a visit to Jerusalem, and he was anxious to stop in Rome on the way. He was troubled lest the campaign of the Judaizers should extend to Rome, and he was anxious that the right type of Christianity

should prevail in the world's capital city, hence to instruct them and to prepare for the visit which he was longing to make, he wrote this letter. Romans is not a complete and systematic statement of Paul's doctrine, but it contains a very full discussion of some subjects which were vital in his thinking, and consequently it is a valuable source for the study of his notion of authority.

### *Philemon and Philippians*

It is not necessary to enter into a lengthy discussion of the place from which Paul wrote these two short letters, or of the question whether *Philippians* was originally one document or two.<sup>5</sup> Inasmuch as these letters are generally accepted as Pauline, and the circumstances which gave rise to them would be the same whether they were written from Caesarea or from Rome, these problems can be passed over.

While Paul was in prison, Onesimus, who was a runaway-slave, belonging to a Christian in Colossae by the name of Philemon, had come under his influence and had become a Christian. Paul sent him back to his master, and he also wrote a brief letter to Philemon, urging him to receive his slave who had become a servant of Christ. Inasmuch as this letter reflects Paul's convictions in regard to the right relationship between master and servant, it throws some light on his idea of authority.

While Paul was in prison, Epaphroditus brought him gifts from the Christians at Philippi and ministered to him in their behalf. When Epaphroditus returned home he carried with him a letter to the church, and while it is more personal in character than any of the rest of Paul's letters, it contains the discussion of some questions and problems which reflects his conception of authority.

### *Development of Paul's Thought*

As is stated above, Paul wrote as a missionary and not as a theologian, and his letters should be studied with that purpose in mind. His letters were written to correct errors and to give needed instruction,

<sup>5</sup> Bernhard Weiss (*Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 1897, pp. 236 ff.) and Carl Clemen (*Die Chronologie der paulinischen Briefe aufs neue Untersucht*, 1893, pp. 249 ff.) maintain that *Philemon* was written during the imprisonment at Caesarea. O. Holtzmann (*Theologische Litteraturzeitung*, 1890, p. 177) and Friedrich Spitta (*Apostelgeschichte ihre Quellen und der Geschichtlicher Wert*, 1891, p. 281) think it most probable that *Philippians* was written during the Caesarean imprisonment, while Carl Clemen (*Die Chronologie der paulinischen Briefe aufs neue Untersucht*, 1893, p. 197) believes it is composed of two original documents, the first having been written at Caesarea, and the second at Rome.

and in them his own thoughts and feelings at the time were expressed. His thought undoubtedly developed under the influence of new situations, but it is not likely that there is as much development in his writings as some would have us believe. A marked development in his writings should not be expected, inasmuch as they all fall within a period of fifteen or eighteen years, and the first letter was not written for about that length of time after his conversion, and his Christian thought had already become quite definitely formulated.

The occasion which led Paul to write a given letter naturally gave it a peculiar character, and when conditions changed, as they sometimes did very rapidly because of controversies, his thought was undoubtedly changed by the new situation.

#### *Method of Procedure*

After making a careful study of the writings accepted as Pauline, a selection has been made of the most important subjects which are discussed in these writings. A study is made of each of these subjects to determine the sources from which Paul derived what he regarded as truth. This study is arranged under five different heads: his apostleship, the doctrinal elements in his writings, the problems arising out of the establishment of Christianity in the Gentile world, the church, and the life of the Christian in the world. In each of these five chapters there is a brief statement of Paul's teaching on the subject under consideration, and then an attempt is made to determine the sources which influenced him in forming his conceptions. The writer's purpose in these chapters is to ascertain the sources from which Paul believed he could derive truth, and to which he felt appeal could be made in support of action or opinion.

The last chapter is a discussion of the various sources from which Paul either consciously or unconsciously derived what he accepted as truth, and the purpose in this part of the discussion is to determine the relation of these sources to each other and their relative value for Paul. The rest of the treatise furnishes the basis for the quest of this last chapter, which is to find the standard by which Paul estimated truth, for such a standard, whether he realized it or not, was for him ultimate authority.

## CHAPTER I

### PAUL'S APOSTLESHIP

### CLAIMS TO BE AN APOSTLE

#### *Statement of his Position*

Paul's defense of his apostleship furnishes a good opportunity to study his conception of the nature and basis of what was for him authority in religion, and what he believed he had a right to insist on as authority for others. His apostleship had not been called in question in Thessalonica when he wrote I Thessalonians, hence no defense of it is made in this letter. He did not even designate himself as an apostle, but he began the letter with the simple greeting—"Paul and Silvanus and Timothy unto the church of the Thessalonians." The situation was very different in Galatia. Judaizing teachers, in order that they might more successfully oppose Paul's gospel, had questioned his apostolic authority. Paul knew his labors in Galatia would end in failure, if there was any doubt in the minds of those whom he had led to Christ about his being an apostle; hence in his letter to these churches he vigorously defended his apostleship. Even the greeting is significant—"Paul, an apostle, not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead."

Paul was confronted by the same situation in Corinth that he had to overcome in Galatia. There were those who sought to undermine his work, and, in their opposition to him, they maintained that he was not an apostle. It seems that there was some one who was a leader in the Corinthian Church that strenuously opposed the apostle Paul (II Cor. 2:5-11; 7:11, 12), and that certain persons, who perhaps constituted the Christ-party, denied that he was an apostle. Those who constituted this latter class insisted that they belonged to Christ in a sense in which Paul did not (II Cor. 10:7; 11:23).<sup>1</sup> Paul asserted

<sup>1</sup> Many writers hold that there was not a separate party in Corinth called the Christ-party. Some believe  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\delta\epsilon\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omega\bar{\nu}$  in I Cor. 1:12 is antithetical to the other phrases rather than co-ordinate with them. According to this theory the passage should read: "Now this I mean that each says 'I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas'—but I am of Christ." That is the position of Räbiger in *Kritische Untersuchungen über den Inhalt der beiden Briefen an die Korinthische Gemeinde*, second edition, 1886. Kirsopp Lake recognizes that there are objections to this view, but he thinks it is the most reasonable interpretation that has been given (See *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, 1911, pp. 127 f.). Other writers think  $\epsilon\gamma\omega\delta\epsilon\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omega\bar{\nu}$  is an interpolation. That is the position of J. Weiss in *Der Erste Korinther Brief*, 1910.

his apostleship in the greetings in both I Corinthians and II Corinthians, and he defended this claim throughout the letters.

Paul had not been in Rome at the time when Romans was written, and it is not probable that any campaign had been waged against him in that community, hence he did not deem it necessary to defend his apostleship in that letter. The fact, however, that his apostleship had been questioned in other communities led him to assert it in the greeting.

The church at Philippi was always loyal to Paul, and there was no occasion for a defense of his apostleship, or even a reference to it, in his letter to that church. He did not feel called upon to make any reference to his apostolic claim in his personal letter to Philemon, but merely referred to himself as "a prisoner of the Lord Jesus."

It is doubtful whether the Twelve recognised Paul as an apostle on an equality with themselves; at least it does not seem that they ever formally gave him this recognition. In defending himself against the attacks of the Judaizers, Paul never claimed the support of the Twelve, and it is quite probable he would have done so had they formally recognized his apostolic authority, for this would have been the strongest argument he could have used against his objectors. He did say the leaders at Jerusalem gave to him and Barnabas "the right hand of fellowship," commanding them to the work among the Gentiles; but that seems to have been as far as they went in the matter.

A careful study of the four great epistles must convince one that while there were those who denied Paul's apostleship, he regarded himself as an apostle with the same authority as the others. He declared he was not self-appointed, but that he had a divine commission for his work. He had been made an apostle, not by men, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father (Gal. 1:1; I Cor. 1:1; II Cor. 1:1; Rom. 1:5).

#### *The Basis of his Claim*

In the discussion of his apostolic appointment, Paul made his own Christian experience fundamental. He was absolutely certain that he was an apostle and that he had been divinely commissioned, and this conviction was the result of his own personal experience. Experience is a comprehensive term because everything which touches life may be included under it, but it has different aspects, and our present problem is to make a study of these to determine the sources from which Paul derived the elements which became a part of his experience. There were two aspects of the experience upon which he based his apostolic

claim: one was in connection with his conversion, and the other with his missionary activities.

a. His conversion-experiences.

Paul believed he had passed through a real and vital experience at the beginning of his Christian life, and it was this which separated him from Judaism and committed him to the new faith. He also believed it was in connection with this experience, which we call conversion, that he received his apostolic commission.

(a). His conversion a revelation of Christ in him.

Paul said God called him through his grace to reveal his Son in him, and the purpose of this revelation was that he might preach him among the Gentiles. It is evident from what follows that Paul was thinking of a very definite experience when he referred to God's revealing his Son in him, and this came at the very beginning of his Christian career, for immediately after the statement about the revelation, he said: "Straightway I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me: but I went into Arabia" (Gal. 1:16, 17). Paul frequently referred to an experience which was paramount to all others, and it must have been in connection with his conversion. At this time Christ laid hold upon him (Phil. 3:12), and this laying hold was in a forceful and violent manner, for he likened his entrance into the Christian life to that of a child that had been abortively born (I Cor. 15:5-10). Paul felt that inasmuch as God had laid hold upon him and had compelled him to become a follower of Christ, there must have been a divine purpose in what he was doing, and that purpose was to make him Christ's ambassador. Paul preached because necessity had been laid upon him (I Cor. 9:16). He was an apostle, not because he had sought the position, nor because he had been appointed by men, but because Christ had commissioned him. This experience, which Paul interpreted as a revelation of Christ in him, and which he believed was his call to be an apostle, was something that was very definite in his thinking, and it was so vital that it was for him authoritative. Paul believed this was something which came into his life suddenly and that it completely transformed him. Up to this time he had regarded Jesus as an impostor and had persecuted his followers; but from the time of this experience, he considered Jesus his Master and was devoted to his cause. Regardless of what the outward circumstances may have been, it is evident that Paul believed he had come into possession of a new power and that his life had been transformed and his religious thinking had been changed. He

thought of himself as one who had died and had been raised to life again. Old things had passed away, and all things had become new. What he had once counted as great gain, he now counted as dross. Paul believed he had frequent visions and revelations and that these were given to guide him in the great crises of life. It was by revelation that he went up to Jerusalem to confer with the other apostles about circumcision (Gal. 2:2). But he regarded the revelation which made him an apostle as different from any of these; it turned his life into new channels. After that revelation he began to preach the faith which he had been zealous to destroy. In this conversion-experience God had revealed his Son in him. At this time he had seen the glory of God shining in the face of Christ (II Cor. 4:6).

We are not concerned in this connection with a psychological explanation of Paul's conversion-experience.<sup>2</sup> Regardless of the theories which may be advanced to explain the change in Paul's life, or of what the facts actually were, it is evident that he believed he had seen Jesus (I Cor. 9:1), and he also believed the appearance of Jesus to him was as real as it had been to the other disciples (I Cor. 9:1; 15:5-8). Paul did not regard his vision of Christ as an optical illusion. The word used in I Cor. 15:8 ( $\omega\varphi\theta\eta$ ) is the same which occurs in Lk. 24:34 in connection with Christ's appearance to Peter. Paul undoubtedly believed he had seen Jesus, and he was certain that this appearance was for the purpose of making him an apostle.

(b). The revelation of Christ, the possession of his gospel.

Paul said he did not receive his gospel from man "but it came through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12). The reason Paul connected the revelation of Christ in him with his call to be an apostle was the conviction that it furnished him his gospel, and the possession of his gospel was his call to preach it. To his mind his message and his apostleship were inseparable. He knew the gospel which he preached was from God (I Thess. 2:2, 8), and the fact that God had entrusted the gospel to him was sufficient proof to his mind that he had divine approval (I Thess. 2:4).

<sup>2</sup>W. Wrede (*Paulus*, 1907, pp. 17 f., English translation, 1908, p. 22 f.) maintains that Paul was of a morbid temperament, and that he was quite likely subject to epileptic fits, and that his conversion is to be explained in the light of these conditions. Other writers hold to this or similar theories. F. C. Conybeare (*Myth, Magic and Morals*, 1910, p. 4; also appendix, p. 363) asserts that this explains not only Paul's conversion, but his other visions and revelations as well.

Paul's statement in the letter to the Galatians that the gospel which he preached was "not after man," for he did not receive it from man, nor was he taught it, "but it came through revelation of Jesus Christ," is open to different interpretations. Did Paul mean to be understood as saying that in his conversion-experience there had been revealed to him all the historical data which he possessed concerning Jesus, or did he mean to state that these had been made known to him in the visions of later years? Or did he mean something entirely different?<sup>3</sup> It is not probable that Paul meant to state that he had received through revelation the historical data concerning Jesus, for he had many opportunities to know these from other sources. Paul was not arguing in the Galatian letter that he did not have opportunity to learn from men the story of the life of Jesus, for he said he was with Peter fifteen days, and that would have furnished ample opportunity to go over the story repeatedly. It seems very probable that one of the motives which took him to Jerusalem at that time was to hear from Peter the story about Jesus. What Paul was insisting on was that no apostolic council was called to take action on his apostleship. He went up to Jerusalem after three years, but his purpose was to have a friendly interview with Peter, and the rest of the apostles were not connected with the visit in any way. He said he saw James, the Lord's brother, but his reference to his meeting with him would indicate that it was incidental and had no significance in connection with his visit at Jerusalem. Paul insisted that the gospel which he preached among the Galatians was divine, for he had received it through revelation of Jesus Christ; and this revelation was not a disclosing of the historical data, and as will be indicated later, these were merely incidental in his message.

It is not probable that Paul meant to affirm that he had received through revelation the whole system of doctrine he was to preach. The revelation of Christ, which was the basis of Paul's gospel, revolutionized his religious thinking, and it required some time for him to readjust himself to this new experience. He said that after God had revealed his Son in him, he went straightway into Arabia (Gal. 1:15-17), and there

<sup>3</sup> F. C. Conybeare (*Myth, Magic and Morals*, 1910, pp. 251 ff.) says Paul meant to state that the historical data concerning the life of Jesus had been made known to him in visions and revelations. He argues at length that Paul insisted that he did not receive the story of the life of Jesus from men, but that it came through "visions and private revelations of his own." He says Paul's gospel, and by this he means the historical statements concerning the life of Jesus, "had nothing to do with what the companions of Jesus remembered of their Master's life and conversations."

has been much discussion about the purpose of this visit. Some recent writers hold that Paul meant to affirm that as soon as he had received his revelation he went into Arabia and began his missionary career.<sup>4</sup> Paul may have done some preaching in Arabia, but he was not ready to preach immediately after his conversion-experience. He was a thinker, and before he could begin his missionary activities it was necessary for him to have a consistent gospel. The basis of this gospel was the revelation of Christ in him, and one purpose for his going into Arabia must have been to have an opportunity to study the whole subject of religion in the light of this revelation. When Paul had adjusted his idea of religion to his new experience he had his message, and he was then ready to preach it.

Through the revelation that was made to him Paul became convinced that Jesus, instead of being an impostor, was in reality the Messiah. He became convinced that the one who had died upon the cross was still living and was his Lord, and that he was the one to whom all men owed allegiance, and that they could be saved through faith in him. This was his gospel, and the revelation of this truth was his call from God to proclaim it, and when he had readjusted his thinking to this revelation he was ready for his work. Paul could say he did not receive his gospel from men, for Christ was the center of his gospel, and he believed it was through revelation that he had come to know Christ. Paul's enemies tried to undermine his work by questioning his apostleship. They insisted that inasmuch as he was not one of the group that had been selected by Christ, and he had not even been set apart by this original group, he had no right to claim apostolic authority. Paul met this criticism by insisting that he was not behind the pillar apostles, for Christ had appeared to him and had given him his commission. He said he did not need appointment by the other apostles, and he virtual-

<sup>4</sup> Kiropp Lake thinks it quite probable that Paul went into Arabia to preach, and that this was the field of his first missionary activities. According to Lake, Paul was arguing that he was divinely commissioned to preach and did not need the sanction of the leaders of the church, hence instead of going to Jerusalem to secure their endorsement, he went into Arabia and began his work. He says: "The antithesis is not between conferring with flesh and blood in Jerusalem, and conferring with God in the desert, but between obeying immediately the commission of God to preach to the Gentiles, and going to some human source in Jerusalem in order to obtain authority or additional instruction." He thinks Paul's argument requires the sense: "As soon as I received my divine commission I acted upon it at once, without consulting anyone, and began to preach in Arabia" (*The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, 1911, pp. 320 ff.).

ly declared that he avoided them, for instead of going to Jerusalem, he went into Arabia.<sup>5</sup>

It is very probable that Paul would be anxious to visit some of the leaders of the church before he entered upon any very aggressive campaign. After his visit with Peter for the purpose of talking with him about the gospel and hearing from him all he knew about Jesus, he went to his work in the regions of Syria and Cilicia; but he was still unknown by face to the churches of Judea. He sought to make it emphatic that he was working independently, yet he called attention to the fact that although he had not been sent out by the churches and was not even known by face to them, they kept in touch with him and were in sympathy with his work, for they heard that he that had once persecuted the church was preaching the faith of which he had once made havoc, and they glorified God in him.

(c). The possession of his gospel of justification by faith, his call to be an apostle to the Gentiles.

Although Paul preached the gospel to his own countrymen and longed for their salvation, yet so much of his time and energy was given to the Gentiles that he was regarded as the apostle to the Gentiles, and he so designated himself (Rom. 11:13). The question is naturally raised whether Paul realized the extent of his mission as soon as he had readjusted his thinking to his conversion-experience, or whether it was his missionary activities which led him to interpret his call as being to the Gentiles. Some writers maintain that the universal character of Paul's gospel was due to his experiences after he began preaching. They hold that the opposition which the Jews manifested to Paul's preaching, and the eagerness of the Gentiles to receive his message, led him to the conviction that his mission was to the Gentile world.<sup>6</sup> The reception which his gospel received did undoubtedly confirm him in

<sup>5</sup> Carl von Weizsäcker believes Paul avoided Jerusalem until he had become adjusted to his new experiences because he felt that the spirit of the Jerusalem Church was not in harmony with the truth which had been revealed to him; but after he had meditated upon his experience from every point of view, and his gospel had become formulated, he decided to visit the leaders of the church (*Das Apostolische Zeitalter Der christlichen Kirche*, 1901, pp. 78 ff.). It is very doubtful whether Paul knew the Jerusalem type of Christianity well enough to have come to this conclusion, and if the account in Acts is accepted as trustworthy, the Jerusalem Christianity with which he had come in close touch was the more liberal type represented by Stephen.

<sup>6</sup> That is the position of Bernhard Weiss (*Lehrbuch der Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 1897, pp. 119 ff., English translation, Vol. I, p. 154), and also of George Barker Stevens (*The Pauline Theology*, 1906, p. 21).

the conviction that it was for the Gentiles, but according to his own interpretation, his call to be an apostle to the Gentile world came with the revelation of Christ in him (Gal. 1:15-24). While it necessarily required some time for Paul to fully comprehend the significance of his call, yet he would scarcely have made the solemn declaration that he was not lying, if he had realized that he had been led into the Gentile mission through the experience of after years.<sup>7</sup>

b. The experiences connected with his missionary activities.

Paul insisted that his apostleship was attested by its fruits. The fact that he had been doing the work of an apostle was indisputable evidence that he had divine sanction for his missionary activities. The basis of his appeal to the leaders at Jerusalem for their approval of the work he was doing was the fruits of his labors (Gal. 2:1-9). Paul did not go to Jerusalem to be appointed an apostle, nor to have his apostleship confirmed by the original group; he merely wanted their sanction to what he had been doing, for he had reached a crisis, and without their approval, his work was in danger of failing (Gal. 2:2). It was expediency that prompted Paul to seek the support of the leaders at Jerusalem, for they were held in high esteem by the whole church, and he knew if they commended the work he was doing he would be able to overcome the antagonistic influence of the Judaizers. Personally it did not make any difference to him what they were (Gal. 2:6), but it did to others, and he was willing to do anything that was honorable to make the cause of Christ triumphant. Paul sought an interview with the leaders first, and after he had their approval, it was easy to secure the support of the larger group. He placed before them the gospel which he had preached among the Gentiles, and showed them the fruits of his labors, and when they perceived the grace that had been bestowed on him and his companion, they gave them the right hand of fellowship that they should go to the Gentiles. The leaders at Jerusalem saw that as God had wrought for Peter unto the apostleship of the circumcision, so he had wrought for Paul unto the Gentiles, and they gladly commended the work he was doing. In other words, the apostles and leaders at Jerusalem, whom all the churches recognized, gave their sanction to Paul and his gospel, because the success of his work was an indication that it had the approval of God.

In his appeal to the churches for apostolic sanction, Paul emphasized the fruits of his labors. He told the Galatians that while the

<sup>7</sup> See A. B. Bruce, *St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, 1894, p. 41.

churches in Judea did not know him by face, yet they had heard of the success of his work, and they glorified God because of what he was doing (Gal. 1:18-24). In his letters to the Corinthians, he insisted that they should regard him as an apostle because he had done among them the work of an apostle. In reply to the criticism of those in Corinth who maintained that he was not an apostle, he referred to his labors in their midst. He told them that regardless of what the attitude of others might be, they ought to consider him an apostle, because he had done among them the work of an apostle. He said: "If to others I am not an apostle, yet at least I am to you; for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord" (I Cor. 9:2). It would seem that the Judaizers brought letters of commendation from influential people at Jerusalem, but Paul said he did not need such testimonials, for the Christians at Corinth were his letters of commendation, written by the spirit of the living God. The churches that had been founded by apostles had a feeling of pride in their apostolic origin, and Paul assured the Corinthians that they were not behind the rest of the churches in this regard, for he was not inferior to the chiefest of the apostles. His credentials were presented to them through signs and wonders and mighty works (II Cor. 12:11, 12). When Paul thought of himself in the light of his career as a persecutor, he felt he was not worthy to be called an apostle (I Cor. 15:9); but when he thought of himself in the light of his Christian labors, he believed he was second to none.

#### **HIS RIGHTS AND AUTHORITY AS AN APOSTLE**

To be an apostle was not to possess an empty title, according to Paul's thinking; it carried with it certain rights and responsibilities. He was willing to bear the responsibilities, and he also insisted on his rights.

##### *To Claim Support*

###### **a. The claim stated.**

Paul believed he was an apostle of equal standing with the others, and he also believed he had equal rights with the others. Among these rights which he could claim, if he desired to do so, was that of support by the church where he was laboring (I Cor. 9:1-14). While he was preaching in Corinth he did not live at the expense of the community, but by means of his own labors, assisted by the help received from Macedonia, he lived without claiming support from the people for whom he was giving his time. It seems that some of his enemies used this as an argument against his apostleship (II Cor. 11:7). In reply

to their statements, Paul said he had a right to claim support, but he did not do it because he wanted to take away from any in the regions of Achaia the occasion of glorying, and in order that he might do this, he was willing to rob other churches that he might labor in Corinth without being at their expense.

The principle which Paul announced in his letters to the Corinthians undoubtedly represented his general attitude. He believed he had the right to claim support, but when he thought it was best for the work he was doing he provided for himself, or received aid from other communities.

b. Basis of his claim.

(a) Experience.

The first argument which Paul used to prove his claim was based on analogy, and this was an appeal to their common experience. The analogies which he employed were of such a character that the Corinthians would be familiar with them. These were not given as conclusive argument, but they served to lay the foundation for argument which he did regard as conclusive. He said the soldier does not fight at his own charges, but he is supported by the country he serves. The man who plants a vineyard eats of the fruit of the vineyard and the man who feeds a flock eats of the milk of the flock (I Cor. 9:7). Paul did not draw his conclusions from these analogies, but the implied argument is evident: if a soldier is supported by the country he is serving, and the man who plants a vineyard or feeds a flock is provided for by the vineyard or the flock, then the man who preaches the gospel has the right to claim maintenance from those for whom he is laboring.

(b) His Jewish inheritance.

Paul felt that analogy would not be sufficient proof for the Corinthians. That was speaking after the manner of men, and he wanted a statement that would be unanswerable. The Old Testament furnished this, for the law teaches the very thing that he had pointed out by analogy: "For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." According to our method of interpreting Scripture, this passage which Paul quoted from Deut. 25:4 might be used as an illustration, but it could not be given any more significance than that. Paul, however, because of his rabbinical training, allegorized the passage and put a meaning into it which was foreign to its original import. He said when God commanded the Israelites not to muzzle the ox when it was treading out the corn but to leave its

mouth free so that it might eat some of the grain as a reward for its labor, he was not thinking of the ox but of the apostles who were to come centuries later, and he commanded this for their sakes.

Having given a direct citation from the Scriptures to prove his contention, Paul further substantiated it by a familiar illustration from the religion of Judaism. He referred to the priests who ate the things in the temple where they ministered, and implied that this was according to the law of Moses, quoted above.

(c) The teachings of Jesus.

As the climax of his argument, Paul stated the teachings of Jesus: "Even so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel." It is evident that  $\delta\ K\wp\os$  refers to Christ, and that Paul intended to place the teachings of Jesus concerning the support of apostles alongside the teachings of the Old Testament.<sup>8</sup> Just as God had ordained that those who minister in the temple should eat of the things of the temple, so Christ declared that those who preach the gospel should be supported by those for whom they are laboring. Paul undoubtedly knew some statement of Jesus like that which is recorded in Matt. 10:10 or Lk. 10:7, 8.

In establishing his right to claim support, Paul appealed first to the common experience of mankind, and then he sought to show that the Old Testament and Jesus himself commanded that this maintenance should be given.

*To determine the character of the gospel preached among the Gentiles*

a. Statement of his claim.

As an apostle to the Gentiles, Paul believed he had authority to determine the character of the gospel that should be preached in the Gentile world. He said nothing about the type of gospel that should be preached in Jewish communities. He was willing that Cephas and James and John should go to the circumcision and preach the gospel as they understood it; but he wanted to be left alone in his own territory to preach the gospel which had been revealed to him, and which had been demonstrated to be effective in the transformation of the Gentiles. He bitterly denounced the Judaizers who came into his field, and he hurled anathemas against those who should proclaim any other gospel than that which he had preached (Gal. 1:8, 9). Paul rebuked Peter when he came into his territory and assumed an attitude that was not in harmony with the gospel which the Gentiles had received (Gal. 2:11-14).

<sup>8</sup> See *Int. Crit. Com.* on I Cor. 9:14.

b. The basis of his claim.

Paul felt absolutely certain about his right to determine the character of the gospel which should be preached in the Gentile world, and his conviction was the result of experience. His plan of labor was determined by the character of his gospel, for this made him the apostle to the Gentiles. According to Rom. 15:20, he would not build upon another man's foundation. His aim was to preach the gospel where Christ had not already been named. The question is naturally raised as to what Paul meant by not building on another man's foundation. He said he had preached the gospel from Jerusalem and round about even unto Illyricum, and was planning to go to Spain to find new territory. He said he was intending to stop in Rome on the way and that this would be the fruition of the desire of many years. He declared he was ready to preach the gospel to those who were in Rome, although a church had already been established there of which he evidently was not the founder. This would seem to indicate that while he had not established the church at Rome, he considered this a part of his field of labor. His field was the Gentile world, or those communities which had received the Gentile type of Christianity (Rom. 1:5, 6, 13; 15:14-16). Paul had seen the Gentiles accept the gospel which he preached, and had witnessed its transforming influence upon their lives, and it was the conviction that this gospel was adapted to the needs of the Gentile world that made him feel that this territory was his and that his authority, as an apostle, to determine the type of gospel which should be preached in this territory was supreme.

In his argument with Peter, Paul appealed to their common experience to support his contention (Gal. 2:11 ff.). When Peter came to Antioch and saw the power of the gospel over the Gentiles, he was delighted and entered into their fellowship, and even ate with them. But when certain came from James, perhaps for the purpose of spying on Peter as well as on Paul, policy induced him to draw back. Because he was afraid of the influence of these spies, he separated himself from the Gentiles, "fearing them that were of the circumcision." This conduct of Peter threatened to wreck the work at Antioch, as it caused the Jews to dissemble, and even Barnabas was carried away. When Paul saw what Peter had done, he rebuked him, for he knew he "walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel." To get Peter to see the error of his course, he appealed to their common experience. He said although they were Jews, they knew that a man was justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law; and inasmuch as they

had forsaken the works of the law because they had not been helped by them, they should not seek to build them up again.

*Not to Exercise Lordship over the Faith of Others*

a. Statement of his position.

Although Paul claimed that his being an apostle to the Gentiles entitled him to determine the character of the gospel that should be preached in the Gentile world, yet he did not feel that he had the right to exercise lordship over the faith of others. He claimed authority to keep out of his field any who would enslave the Gentile Christians, but he did not believe it was within his province to force the faith of even Gentiles into his mold. He said he did not seek to have lordship over the faith of others, but he was merely their helper (II Cor. 1:24).

Paul knew he had been divinely called to be an apostle, and he believed this gave him certain authority as a teacher. His message was the one which God gave him. His wisdom was of God rather than of this world. He praised the Corinthians for having received the traditions as he had delivered them (I Cor. 11:2). He told the Thessalonians that he and his associates might have claimed authority as apostles of Christ (I Thess. 2:6). In his relation to the Corinthians he sometimes seemed to try to force them to do his bidding regardless of their own wishes, but this was in matters pertaining to conduct, and he assured them that his only motive in his insistence was to help them. He believed authority had been given him by the Lord, but that it was for the purpose of building up the churches and not for the purpose of tearing them down (II Cor. 10:8; 13:10); that being true, he could exercise this authority only as it would contribute to the building up of Christians.

b. The basis of his conviction.

It is not always easy to explain the process by which one's convictions are formed. Sometimes Paul's argument is stated so definitely that it is not difficult to determine what he thought was the basis of his judgment on a certain matter, but quite frequently that is not the case. He did not state what it was that led him to feel that he did not have the right to exercise lordship over the faith of others, but it was undoubtedly his own experience. Faith was for him a personal matter; it was the result of Christ's laying hold upon him. Others might help him in the matter of faith, but they could not compel him. Paul's experience had convinced him that faith was a personal matter for others also; it was the result of Christ's having entered into their lives. Inasmuch as faith concerns the individual and his Master, not even an apostle has the right to exercise lordship over it.

## SUMMARY

There are many influences which determine one's relation to life and the interpretation of his various experiences. If Paul were living in our day and had our psychological and philosophical conceptions, he would interpret his experiences very different from what he did. Each man has a mental attitude which determines to a large extent his reaction to his environment. Paul's mental attitude was that of a devout Jew who believed God was outside man's world and occasionally broke into it in a miraculous manner for the accomplishment of a particular purpose. He had heard of Jesus through the Christians whom he was persecuting. He had heard their declarations that God had raised him from the dead, and that he was now living as their Messiah, and he had heard them plead with others to accept him as their Messiah. Although he had not found satisfaction in his religion, the Christians were rejoicing in theirs. Without being conscious of it, Paul was passing through a crisis, and the journey for the purpose of persecution compelled him to think over the experiences of the Christians in the light of his own, and this helped to prepare him for a radical change. He became convinced that the Christians were right in their claims, and that he was opposing God by his persecutions. He suddenly stopped in his career, and accepted the Christ of the Christians. Paul regarded this change as a revelation of Christ. He believed God had entered into his world in a miraculous manner, and that the purpose of this revelation was to make him an apostle. He was absolutely certain that he was an apostle, because God had miraculously appointed him. He believed his authority had been handed down from heaven. Paul believed his apostleship was attested by supernatural signs (II Cor. 12:11 ff.). No one had the right to doubt his claim, because "by signs and wonders and mighty works" he had demonstrated his apostleship. He also believed God had ratified his apostolic appointment by the success which he had given him. The victories which his gospel had won in the Gentile world were convincing proof that God had given his sanction to what he was doing.

Paul knew that God had bestowed upon him special prerogatives. He knew he had authority to claim support and to determine the type of gospel which should be preached in the Gentile world, and he knew he had authority over others as long as he used it for their upbuilding. He made use of the Scriptures and the teachings of Jesus to verify his claims, but the real proof for Paul himself was his own experience. God had entered into his life in a miraculous manner and had given him special powers, and this meant special authority for him.

## CHAPTER II

### DOCTRINAL ELEMENTS IN PAUL'S WRITINGS

Paul wrote, not as a theologian, but as a religious teacher, and the one who studied his writings to find a system of theology would fail to understand him. Not even in Romans did he attempt to state his doctrine in systematic form. He was, first of all, a missionary, and all his letters had a missionary purpose. But while Paul did not write as a theologian, he did have his theology, and his doctrine is manifest in all his letters. Our present task is to make a brief study of some of the most important of these doctrinal conceptions to determine the sources from which he derived them. Our purpose is not to make an exhaustive study of Paul's doctrine, but merely to investigate the most important of these as they are related to his conception of authority. This will be done under the following heads: his conception of God, of man and his world, of Christ, of the new life, and of future things.

#### GOD

##### *His Conception Stated*

Paul made many references to God, but his idea is perhaps indicated as much by what is implied as by what is stated. He taught that God is one (Gal. 3:20; I Cor. 8:6). While there are many so-called gods, yet in reality there is only one God. God is living and true (I Thess. 1:9). He is not of wood and stone like the gods of the heathen. He was the creator of heaven and earth. All things are from him (I Cor. 8:6), and all things belong to him (I Cor. 10:26). He thought of God as existing in heaven from whence he sent forth his Son (Gal. 4:4), and yet he believed he had a vital connection with earth, and especially with the people on earth. He was the God of Israel in a peculiar sense, for he entered into a special covenant relation with them, and gave them the oracles (Rom. 3:2; 9:4, 5). But while he was the God of the Jews in a peculiar sense, he revealed himself to all (Rom. 1:19). He is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ (II Cor. 1:3), and he is also the Father of the Christians (Gal. 1:1, 3). He is faithful, and he is the Comforter of his children (II Cor. 1:5). He is loving, even towards sinners (Rom. 5:8), and yet he is wrathful towards those who continue as his enemies (Rom. 1:18; 2:8, 9). Paul regarded God as a Sovereign

Being and he believed he had a right to choose whom he wished to carry out his will (I Thess. 1:4; I Cor. 1:26-31; Rom. 8:28-30). Paul believed God is revealed to men in many ways. He is revealed through the natural world and through the conscience of man, hence the Gentiles, who have not had a special revelation, can know him. He is revealed in history, and especially in the Jewish nation, and above all else he is revealed in Christ.

*Sources from which Paul Derived his Conceptions*

It would be difficult, if not impossible, to point out the sources from which we have derived any particular notion we may have of religion; it is much more difficult to point out the sources from which others have derived their conceptions; and the difficulty is increased when the person we are studying lived in a past age and in an environment which is different from ours. It is possible, however, to determine the most important forces which have contributed elements to our religious thinking; and, just to the extent that we reconstruct the world in which Paul lived, can we fix upon the most important factors which entered into his thinking. Upon the basis of a reconstruction of Paul's environment we shall attempt to find out the sources from which he derived the elements of his thought, and this will enable us to determine the value which he assigned to these sources.

a. His Jewish inheritance.

Paul had been a Pharisee before he became a Christian, and he brought over into his Christian experience the religious heritage of Judaism. As a Jew, Paul had believed in God, and this belief naturally helped to shape his Christian experience. The references which Paul made to God are not of a character that would lead us to believe his conception of God as a Christian differed radically from what it had been as a Jew. He did not seek to correct erroneous impressions concerning God, but his references would indicate that he felt he was stating what he had always believed.

In tracing the sources from which Paul derived his religious thinking, it is safe to assume that when the facts can be explained by what Paul must have known before he became a Christian, it is needless to look elsewhere for an explanation. The God whom Paul knew when he was a Pharisee continued to be the God whom he worshipped when he was a Christian, although his conception of him was very much enriched by his Christian experiences. Paul never discussed the divine nature, and when he made any reference to this, he expressed the ideas of Juda-

ism. There is no indication in any of his writings that he consciously took exception to the Jewish idea of God. He at no time intimated that his belief in God as a Jew and a Pharisee was imperfect. On the contrary, he accepted that belief and made it a part of his Christian teaching.

Paul placed much emphasis on divine election; yet he was not always consistent on that point. At one time he seemed to say the election or rejection of Israel was dependent absolutely upon God's choice, while at another time he seemed to feel that the rejection of the Jews was due to their own failure. This conception was largely due to his rabbinical training. The doctrine of election is definitely taught in "The Wisdom of Solomon," as the following quotation will indicate: "Verily, as for a man, his position is laid in the balance before Thee. He addeth not thereto, nor increaseth contrary to thy judgment, O God" (5:6). According to "The Assumption of Moses" (12:8-13) the certainty of blessedness for the righteous is not dependent upon their own piety, but upon God having ordained it. The doctrine of divine election had become definitely formulated in the Pharisaic thought of the time. According to Josephus,<sup>1</sup> the Pharisees ascribe everything "to fate, or providence, and to God"; and yet they "allow, that to act what is right, or the contrary, is principally in the power of man." The position of the Pharisees, as it was stated by Josephus, was virtually the position of Paul.

#### b. His Contact with the Mediterranean World.

Before the time of his conversion, Paul's thought of God's relation to the world was broader than that of the Palestinian Jew of his day. He had spent his early life among the Gentiles, and the conviction had been impressed upon him that many of them knew God and were seeking to serve him. This conviction was confirmed by his contact with the Gentiles during his missionary career. The Pharisees who had been raised in Palestine despised the Gentiles because they did not know the law nor the God who gave the law. Paul, however, because of his contact with the peoples of the Mediterranean world, had come to believe that there were Gentiles who did know God, for they had seen him through the things that are made. [Paul's life in the Graeco-Roman world had convinced him that there were Gentiles who, although they did not have the law, were doing by nature the things of the law, and that some of them were doing these things better than were many of the Jews who possessed the law.

<sup>1</sup> *Bell. Jud.*, II, 8. 14.

c. His Christian experience.

The conception of God which Paul had when he was a Pharisee was enriched by his Christian experience. His conversion magnified his notion of the sovereignty of God until he thought of him as the One who calls man into being and forces him into his service, and as the One who selects whom he wills and hardens whom he wills. Paul was preaching because God had determined it. God had revealed his Son in him and had called him by his grace, and he had no choice in the work; his task was to go where God led him. Paul did not attempt to reconcile his conception of individual freedom with that of divine election. When he thought of God he forgot all else but his absolute sovereignty, and he felt it was only by divine grace that man could be saved; but when he thought of man he knew he was free to choose, and he urged him to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling. Paul went on preaching the gospel, for his own experience had demonstrated that it was the power of God unto salvation; but he felt that those who believed were the ones whom God had called. Paul did not regard his own experience as peculiar. He believed God was dealing with all mankind as he had dealt with him. It was by grace that he had been saved, and others were being saved in the same way. Just a few out of the great mass were accepting the gospel, and the explanation of this situation was to be found in the fact of divine election rather than in the inability of the gospel to reach them. It seems that in Corinth not many learned or influential had accepted the gospel, but those who were Christians were, for the most part, uncultured, and had come from the humbler walks of life. This was not an indication of the weakness of the gospel but it was a demonstration of the power and glory of God (I Cor. 1:26-31). The fact that there were few learned or influential people in the church proved to Paul that "not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." It indicated that God was choosing the foolish and weak things of the world that he might put to shame the things that are wise and strong. It showed that God wanted to remove all opportunity for glorying so that no one would have any occasion of boasting except in the Lord. The eagerness of some to receive the gospel was an indication of their divine election. He told the Thessalonians that he knew of their election, for the gospel, when it was preached to them, came not in word only, "but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance" (I Thess. 1:4, 5).

In his missionary labors Paul had to face the fact that his own countrymen were rejecting the gospel. It was the exceptional Jew who

heard his message, while the Gentiles received it gladly. The Jews, who were God's chosen people, were hostile to the gospel; while the Gentiles, who had been "strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world," were receiving it. This might seem to indicate either that the gospel was not from God, or if it was from God, that his promise to Israel was coming to naught (Rom. 9:6); but Paul's explanation of the situation was the fact of divine election. His conception of God and his own experience naturally led him to the conclusion that the attitude of the Jews was to be explained by the fact that God was rejecting them.<sup>2</sup>

Paul did not feel that this was a new conception of God. God's rejection of the Jews and the choosing of the Gentiles were in perfect accord with his method during the past—"For he saith to Moses, I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion . . . So then he hath mercy on whom he will and whom he will he hardeneth" (Rom. 9:15-18). God chose Abraham because he willed it, and Isaac was the one he was pleased to select from among the children of Abraham. Jacob, though he was the younger, was chosen, while Esau was rejected, and this choice was made before the children were born. The choosing and the rejecting were expressions of the divine will—"Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated" (Rom. 9:13).

Paul's Christian conception of the divine sovereignty of God was not consciously different from what it had been before his conversion. His idea had undoubtedly been modified somewhat by his Christian experiences, and especially by his life as a missionary, but there is no indication that he was conscious of any such modification. His own personal experience convinced him that his conversion was the result of God's grace, and his missionary labors had led him to believe that God was rejecting the Jews and choosing the Gentiles. I Paul had

<sup>2</sup> R. Travers Herford puts this very strikingly (*Pharisaism*, 1912, p. 187). He says Paul's doctrine of the rejection of the Jews was his method of "getting over a formidable difficulty, namely, the obvious fact that the attitude of the Jews towards Christ was not at all what was to be expected, if his theory of the person and work of Christ were true." Continuing, he says: "It must not be forgotten that the starting point of his theory was his own personal relation to Christ, as he felt it with an intense certainty which nothing could shake for a moment. This was his foundation of absolute truth; and that could not but be the clue by which he interpreted all that he beheld in the world, and read in the history of man." Herford takes issue with Paul over his premises, but we are not concerned with that in this connection. Granting his premises, and there was no doubt in Paul's mind about the correctness of these, there could be but one conclusion, and that is that God was rejecting the Jews.

been asked to prove his statement concerning divine election he would perhaps have replied that God had manifested his sovereign power when he had laid hold upon him at the time of his conversion, and that he had seen this same power manifested in every place where he had preached. He would perhaps have added that the Scriptures plainly teach that God is supreme in his dealings with men. He is the potter and men are but clay in his hands (Jer. 18:6).

Paul's Christian experience undoubtedly gave him a new notion of God's relation to his children.<sup>3</sup> He had learned from experience that God makes all things work together for good to them that love him, and are called according to his purpose (Rom. 8:28). In the light of the sufferings of Christ, Paul had come to a new understanding of God. He had come to appreciate his love, for he commended "his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). Paul realized that if God spared not his own Son but delivered him up for us, he would also with him freely give us all things (Rom. 8:32). He was confident that the love of God which is in Christ is so strong that nothing could separate him from it (Rom. 8:35-39). The divine Spirit which Paul had received through Christ enabled him to understand the nearness of God. The Spirit which had taken possession of him was not of bondage unto fear, but it was a Spirit of adoption which enabled him to cry, Abba, Father (Rom. 8:15).

#### MAN AND HIS WORLD *Statement of Paul's Teaching*

Paul evidently thought of the universe as being like a great building in which there are compartments, one above the other (Phil. 2:10). He believed heaven was above the earth, and was the abode of God, and of Christ, and of the angels (I Thess. 1:10; 4:16; Gal. 1:8). Paul seems to have thought of heaven as arranged in a number of stories, one above the other, for he said he had been caught up even to the third heaven (II Cor. 12:2). He regarded the earth, which is seen, as temporal; but heaven, which cannot be seen, as eternal. He represented the world as evil (Gal. 1:4), and in bondage, and groaning for deliverance (Rom. 8:19-23). He did not, however, believe the world is evil in its essence. He thought of it as belonging to God, but he realized that there are forces in it which are in opposition to God, and which seem to be defeating him.

<sup>3</sup>Heinrich Weinel (*Paulus*, 1904, p. 80, English translation, 1906, p. 102) states this emphatically: "The new man implied a new God. Saul's experience on the road to Damascus had revealed the God of his fathers in a new light."

Paul thought of the abyss under the earth as the abode of Satan and the evil spirits, and he believed Satan had much power in the world. He regarded the present age as evil, and Satan as its ruler (II Cor. 4:4). He believed Satan and the evil spirits seek to injure men and defeat God's plans for his kingdom. Paul had purposed to come to Thessalonica, but Satan had hindered him (I Thess. 2:18). He had a thorn in the flesh, and it was regarded as a messenger of Satan to buffet him (II Cor. 12:7-9). This was perhaps a physical malady, and many have believed it was a defective eye-sight. Paul evidently believed Satan tortures men by inflicting upon them physical sufferings (I Cor. 5:5). He believed Satan is watching for his opportunity to lead men into sin (I Cor. 7:5), and that he has many devices to deceive people (II Cor. 2:11). He even fashions himself as an angel of light that he may induce men to follow his deceptions (II Cor. 11:14). Paul regarded the evil spirits as being especially active in the heathen world. He believed they were closely connected with idol-worship (I Cor. 10:20, 21), and hence he felt that participation in heathen sacrifices would bring one in fellowship with demons.

Paul did not have much to say about angels, but it is evident from his few references that they had a place in his thinking. He included angels among those influences which were not able to separate him from the love of God (Rom. 8:38, 39), and in writing to the Corinthians, he said he was made a spectacle both to angels and to men. His use of angels in these passages may be somewhat figurative, but he also referred to the law as having been ordained by angels (Gal. 3:19).

Paul thought of man in his natural state as being of the earth, and as partaking of earthly qualities (I Cor. 15:47, 48); hence he regarded him as sinful and subject to death. He believed man inherited this sinful nature from Adam, and inasmuch as all have originated from Adam, sin is universal in its scope. Paul regarded man as composed of flesh and spirit, and he believed there is constant warfare between these two natures (Rom. 7:25).

*Sources from which Paul Derived his Conception of Man  
and his World*

a. His Jewish inheritance.

The statement, made above, concerning Paul's relation to Judaism, is especially applicable in this connection. The idea which he had about man and his world before his conversion continued to be a part of his Christian thought, unless it was modified by his new experiences.

Paul's conception of the compartments in the universe is Jewish, as is also the different heavens. This is brought out very strikingly in the book of Enoch. His notion of Satan and the evil spirits is in harmony with the Jewish thought of his time. His conviction that Satan and the evil spirits inflict suffering on men is expressed in the Book of Jubilees,<sup>4</sup> where they are represented as blinding and killing the grandchildren of Noah. The idea that in sacrificing to idols sacrifice is in reality made to demons is expressed in Deut. 32:17, and this conception was common in the Jewish literature of Paul's time.<sup>5</sup> The belief that the law was ordained through angels was a part of the Jewish thought of Paul's day. Stephen, in his defense, spoke of the law as having been ordained by angels (Acts 7:58), and it is thus stated in the Greek translation of the Old Testament.<sup>6</sup>

Inasmuch as the thought which Paul expressed of the world, of angels and of demons is found in current Judaism, it is safe to assume that this was a part of his inheritance from his pre-Christian life. When he wrote on these subjects, it was in terms of the thought of his age.

The conception that man is both sinful and subject to death, and that he inherited these relationships from Adam, was a part of the Jewish thought of Paul's day. He accepted the Old Testament story, which had been much elaborated in current Jewish thought, of Adam's fall and the punishment of death which was imposed upon him in consequence of that fall; and he undoubtedly accepted as truth which had been handed down to him that on account of Adam's transgression, sin and death had passed to his posterity (I Cor. 15:45-49; Rom. 5:12-21).

#### b. The thought of the Mediterranean world.

There has been much discussion concerning what Paul meant by the conflict between the flesh and the spirit. There was no subject upon which the Hebrew and Greek mind were more widely divergent than that of the flesh. The Greek thought of the flesh as being inherently evil, while the Hebrew regarded the body with reverence. Was Paul, in his notion of the flesh, in harmony with Greek thought or with Hebrew thought? or was his idea different from either? There are many passages in his writings which emphasize the antagonism between the flesh and the spirit. One of the most striking of these is Gal. 5:16, 17: "Walk by the spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts

<sup>4</sup> See 10:2.

<sup>5</sup> See Int. Crit. Com., I Cor., pp. 216 ff.

<sup>6</sup> LXX, Deut. 33:2.

of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other; that ye may not do the things that ye would." Paul urged the Christians to mortify the flesh (Rom. 8:13; I Cor. 5:5; 9:27; II Cor. 4:10, 11). This conflict is described at length in Rom. 7:7-15, and according to this passage, no good thing dwells in the flesh. Paul said the law in his members made war against the law of his mind, and brought him "into captivity under the law of sin which is in his members."

The Greek of Paul's day regarded the body as a prison in which the soul was enslaved, and by which it was contaminated. Did Paul, in his writings, show the influence of this Greek thought, and if so, to what extent was he actuated by it? Many writers have insisted that he was dominated by the Greek conception of the flesh.<sup>7</sup> Many writers who hold that Paul was in the main independent of Greek thought feel that he was somewhat influenced by it in his antithesis between the flesh and the spirit.<sup>8</sup> Paul was undoubtedly familiar with the thought of the Greek world, as were the Christians to whom he was writing, and it would be almost inevitable that he should be influenced by it, not only in the form in which he expressed himself, but in the content of his message as well. But while that much is granted, it should be borne in mind that there were other influences which contributed more to Paul's conception of the struggle between the flesh and the spirit than did the thought of the Greek world.

#### c. His own experience.

Many writers hold that there was no connection between Paul's notion of the struggle between the flesh and the spirit and the Greek thought of his day. They hold that his dualism was purely ethical, and that the Old Testament and his own experience would have furnished him a sufficient basis.<sup>9</sup>  $\sigma\alphaρξ$  is used quite frequently in the Old Testament to designate man's nature, which is weak and perishable, in con-

<sup>7</sup> Dr. James Adam (*The Religious Teachers of Greece*, 1908, p. 381) points out the resemblance between Paul's discussion of the flesh and the spirit, and the thought of Plato. Percy Gardner (*The Religious Experience of St. Paul*, 1911, p. 167) thinks there are traces of Greek influence in Paul's discussion, but that it does not fairly represent him. He says: "We can in places detect insertions of Greek thought which scarcely fit their context."

<sup>8</sup> Orello Cone (*Paul, the Man, the Missionary, and the Teacher*, 1898, p. 224) holds that the radical metaphysical dualism finds no expression in Paul's writings, yet he thinks his ethical dualism probably reflects Hellenistic influence.

<sup>9</sup> Alexander Bruce (*St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, 1911, pp. 268 f.) thinks Paul's conception was somewhat like the theory of the Greeks, but that there was no

trast with God's, which is strong and imperishable. Paul used flesh in that sense many times, but he advanced beyond that idea and put into it an ethical content.

The teaching of the Old Testament in Paul's Jewish home furnished the basis for his conception of the struggle between the flesh and the spirit; the impression made by this teaching was modified by his contact with the thought of the Greek world; but the influence which contributed most to the development of his idea was the struggle which he had experienced in his own soul. Paul's notion of the flesh had an ethical content. He knew that one element of the weakness of the flesh was moral in character, and that was so important in his thinking that it became the dominant idea. He knew the flesh was the seat of passions and desires, which, if not conquered, would lead to sin.<sup>10</sup>

There are some passages in Paul's writings, which, taken apart from the others, would seem to indicate that he regarded the body, or the flesh, as essentially evil. He spoke of putting to death the deeds of the body in order that he might live (Rom. 7:24; 8:10). He declared that no good thing dwelt in the flesh (Rom. 7:18), and he even urged Christians to mortify the flesh (Rom. 8:13; I Cor. 5:5). On the other hand, Paul said, "The body is for the Lord" (I Cor. 6:13), and he believed the members can be made instruments of righteousness (Rom. 6:13). He said the body is "a temple of the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 6:19,

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connection between them. He thinks Paul did not come to his conclusion by theorizing, but he "contented himself with stating the facts as they presented themselves to him in experience." Bruce does not think it probable that the Greek theory was known to Paul, and he believes that if it had been known to him it would not have had any attraction for him, as his interest was wholly ethical and religious. George B. Stevens (*The Theology of the New Testament*, 1910, pp. 340 ff.) says: "In the contrast between flesh and spirit we have to do not with a metaphysical dualism based upon the inherent evil of matter and derived from the Graeco-Alexandrian speculation, but with a view of man which has its basis in the Old Testament." Stevens held that while Paul's doctrine had its basis in The Old Testament, it was worked out in the laboratory of his own experience. He says: "His dualism was not based upon the idea of the inherent evil of matter, but upon the fact of experience that out of man's sensuous nature arise potent enticements to sin and that, in actual sinful humanity, the flesh is a powerful ally of evil."

<sup>10</sup> Alexander Bruce (*St. Paul's Conception of Christianity*, 1911, pp. 264 ff.) thinks Paul had to fight an unceasing battle with his own fleshly desires, and especially with sexual impulses, and that his discussion must be studied in the light of that fact. He thinks Paul had these fleshly desires in mind when he said, "I buffet my body," and he thinks that statement is a sufficient guide to Paul's thought.

20) and he admonished the Romans to present their bodies "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" (Rom. 12:1). Paul believed the life of Jesus may be manifested "in our mortal flesh" (II Cor. 4:11), and that the body itself may be redeemed (Rom. 8:23). If in his thought of the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, Paul was influenced to any marked degree by the notions of the Greek world, the elements which he took up into his own experience must have been worked over under the influence of his soul struggles. Instead of believing the body is inherently evil, he declared it belongs to God and should be consecrated to his service. Instead of identifying the flesh with sin, he thought of it as being the abode of sin. His own experience, which was confirmed by the experience of others, as he had observed it, had convinced him that there are evil desires and impulses which have their seat in the flesh, and that these lead to sin unless they are overcome.

Paul's failure in the struggle to overcome the flesh, and the subsequent victory which he had won through the help of Christ were fundamental in his thinking. He believed the natural spirit with which the flesh is in conflict belongs to every man, and that this may be defiled (II Cor. 7:1; I Thess. 5:23), and it may even be eternally lost (I Cor. 5:5). The battle is constantly being waged between the flesh and the spirit, and Christ helps us to win the victory and enables us to make the flesh our servant. Paul looked into his own soul and described the conflict as he had passed through it, and he considered his interpretation of his experience authoritative, for he felt it was confirmed by the experience of others.

Paul's experience was also fundamental in his discussion of the relation of sin to humanity. As already indicated, he inherited the Jewish belief that sin was introduced into the world through the transgression of Adam; and yet he was confident, as he interpreted his own experience, that the flesh is the means through which sin manifests its power. He also felt, as he reflected on the conflicts in his own soul, that sin is the result of man's will, and hence man is responsible for his wrong-doing. Paul held that sin is universal, and this conclusion was confirmed by his own observations, and it was also taught in the Scriptures.

Paul, as a boy, had the idea of man and his world which was held by the Jews of the Dispersion. This differed somewhat from the view of the Palestinian Jew, and his contact with the thought of the Mediterranean world, both before and after he became a Christian, led to further modifications. Paul's mature Christian thought of the world

was not much different from what it had been as a Jew, but his idea of man was very much changed. The struggle which he had had with sin because of its connection with his body, and the observation of these same struggles in the men about him, together with the Greek thought with which he must have been familiar, gave him a conception of man which was very different from what was held by the Palestinian Jew. His ideas were born out of soul struggles in the environment of the Mediterranean world.

### CHRISTOLOGY

Paul, in his writings, had much to say about the Christ, and his statements on this subject furnish one of the best opportunities we have to investigate his conception of authority. This part of Paul's thought can be considered most effectively by following the order in which it was naturally presented to his mind. He was concerned, first of all, with the heavenly Christ whom he had come to know; and his relation to the Christ of faith naturally made him interested in the historical Jesus, and especially in his death and resurrection; and his interest in the historical Jesus, and the Christ whom he had come to know, made him interested in the pre-existent Christ, as well as in the Christ of the future age.

#### *The Christ of Faith*

##### a. Statement of Paul's position.

Paul placed much stress on the knowledge of the heavenly Christ. His supreme desire was to know him, and his great purpose in life was to lead others to know him. He designated him as "Jesus Christ, our Lord," and "our Lord Jesus Christ." He believed Christ was his Lord, and he frequently referred to himself as "the bond-servant of Christ." He preached Christ to others as their Lord (II Cor. 4:5), and he believed his lordship extended to all men, and that he is rich unto all that call upon him (Rom. 10:12). Paul was convinced that it is through the heavenly Christ that the new spiritual humanity is created. He is the head of the church, and he is the dispenser of spiritual gifts. Paul believed the Christ whom he worshipped had been highly exalted, and had been given the "name which is above every name," and yet he felt that the Christ of his faith was subordinate to God and was dependent upon him (I Cor. 3:23; 15:24-28). Although Paul felt that the Christ whom he had come to know was subordinate to God, yet he believed that he had been so exalted that he is the very image of God (II Cor. 4:4).

When one studies Paul's writings, he must be convinced that there are striking differences between the Christ whom he worshipped, and to whom he sought to direct men, and the Jesus of the Synoptic Gospels. There was development along many lines, and there were many influences which contributed to that development.<sup>11</sup> Not only was the spiritual Christ whom Paul worshipped different from the Jesus of history, but he was more interested in the Christ whom he had come to know than he was in the Jesus who had lived in other days.<sup>12</sup>

b. Sources from which Paul derived his conception of the Christ of faith.  
(a) His Jewish inheritance.

Before his conversion, Paul had believed in the Messiah who was to inaugurate the Kingdom of God, and he was looking for his appearance. These Messianic ideas formed a part of the background for Paul's conversion-experiences, and they also helped to determine the Christ in whom he came to believe. He naturally interpreted the person of Christ in the light of ideas which were already familiar to him.<sup>13</sup> These Jewish ideas, however, were not enough to account for the Christ in whom Paul believed and to whose service he consecrated his life. There were other elements which were even more important than Jewish Messianism, for when one compares the Messianic ideas of the Jews with Paul's Christology, he must be convinced that the differences are more striking than the similarities.

(b) The life and thought of the Mediterranean world.

The life and thought of the Mediterranean world cannot be neglected in a genetic study of Paul's Christology. Paul was a Hellenist, and

<sup>11</sup> R. J. Campbell ("Jesus or Christ?" *The Hibbert Journal Supplement* for 1909, p. 189) thinks there is little connection between the Christ of Paul and the Jesus who actually lived among men. He says: "So far as we can judge from gospel evidence the Christ of the Apostle Paul bore little or no relation to the actual Jesus of Galilee." Continuing, he adds: "All he has to say about Christ could just as well have been said under any other name than that of Jesus." This is an exaggeration of the real situation, for there is a close connection between the Christ of Paul and the Jesus of history.

<sup>12</sup> J. R. Cohu (*St. Paul and Modern Research*, 1911, p. 17) correctly represents Paul in the statement: "The whole tenor of his teaching is that it is infinitely better to see Christ with the eye of the soul than with the eye of the body," but he undoubtedly misrepresents him when he says Paul believed the knowledge of Christ after the flesh hindered rather than helped the knowledge of him after the spirit.

<sup>13</sup> Principal J. E. Carpenter ("Jesus or Christ? p. 239) says: "Pauline Christology cannot be wholly explained by way of inference from the experience of his conversion. Steeped in contemporary eschatology, he must have already had his own conceptions of what the Messiah would be."

lived in an important Greek center, and he must have been familiar with the savior-deities of the mystery religions. It is very probable that the Greek notion that the deities enter into men and take possession of them influenced Paul in the development of his thought of the Christ who took possession of him.

Paul's contact with the broader life of the Gentile world must have broadened his idea of the Messiah. Nationalism must have dropped into the background somewhat, and in his thinking he must have emphasized the ethical and spiritual mission of the Messiah. It is barely probable that the possibility that he was to be the Messiah of all those who were living righteous lives, regardless of whether they were Jews or Gentiles, had been suggested to his mind.

(c) His pre-Christian thought about Christ.

Paul had known of Christ before the time of his conversion, but his knowledge had not been sympathetic. He had regarded Jesus as an impostor, and he had thought the Christ whom the Christians worshipped was a delusion. He must have heard the Christians whom he had been persecuting tell the story of Jesus, and he had witnessed their faith in the heavenly Christ. He must have realized that they identified Jesus with the Messiah whom the Jews were expecting, and that they believed he was still living. Paul must have understood that these Christians whom he was persecuting placed the Christ above all other beings, except God. They not only worshipped him, and devoted their lives to get others to worship him, but they were willing to die for their faith in him.

(d) His own personal experience.

Paul's sympathetic knowledge of Christ began with his conversion. Through some wonderful experience Paul was changed from an enemy of Christ into his most zealous advocate. Many theories have been advanced to explain this experience, but it is evident that Paul interpreted it as a revelation of Christ. At that time he began to know Christ according to the Spirit, and this was fundamental to the development of his Christian thought.

According to Paul's own statement, he had not found peace and assurance while he was living under law, and he must have felt that these persecuted Christians had what he had been seeking, but had failed to find. These feelings must have raised questionings in his mind: could it be possible that these Christians were right, and he was wrong. These conflicts in his soul prepared him for the experiences which he interpreted as a revelation of Christ. If his persecuting career, in connection

with his Messianic ideas and his knowledge of the Christ which he had gained from the Christians, prepared him for the experiences which he interpreted as a revelation of Christ in him, it was natural that he should identify this Christ whom he had come to know, not only with the Messiah of the Jews, but also with the Jesus whose followers he had been persecuting.<sup>14</sup> This experience of Christ, as Paul interpreted it, and the experiences of the after years were authoritative for him, and the one article of his creed was, Christ is Lord.

We cannot be absolutely certain about the development of Paul's Christology, but we can make a very probable estimate of it. As a Pharisee, he had believed in the Messiah, and he had looked forward to his coming. His contact with the thought of the Greek world had broadened his conception of the Messiah, and had prepared him for still more radical changes in the future. His failure to find satisfaction while trying to serve God according to the law, and his contact with the Christians, who had apparently found peace in the Christ whom they were worshipping, prepared him for an upheaval in his own experience. The statements which he had heard the Christians make about the Christ they were worshipping, and whom they said was Jesus who had been exalted to God's right hand, and whom they identified with the Jewish Messiah, led him to make the same identification when the great upheaval came in his soul. All these influences furnished the basis for what was the beginning of Paul's experience of the heavenly Christ, and during years of Christian living and service the Christ of faith, as expressed in his epistles, was developed.

### *The Historical Jesus*

#### a. Statement of Paul's teaching.

There has been much discussion in recent years concerning Paul's knowledge of the historical Jesus, and of his estimate of the life and teachings of Jesus, as he knew them.<sup>15</sup> One of the passages around which the discussion of the value of the life and teachings of Jesus for

<sup>14</sup> R. J. Campbell ("Jesus or Christ?" p. 184) says: "It is not to be ignored that in the case of such a man as Paul personal experience and the needs of his own religious life had a dominating shaping influence upon his thought, but the molds of that thought were already supplied to him." According to Campbell, Paul built up the Christ-idea out of Jewish and Hellenistic elements which had entered into his intellectual training, and then imposed this concept on the historic figure of Jesus.

<sup>15</sup> Benj. W. Bacon ("Jesus or Christ?" p. 213) says the teachings and doings of Jesus' earthly career were for Paul a subordinate feature of the apostolic message. According to Bacon, Paul thought of Christ's earthly career as a brief interruption of his heavenly existence, and his interest was in "the Lord from heaven."

Paul has centered in II Cor. 5:16: "Wherefore as for us, we know no man henceforth after the flesh: even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more." Some writers think that passage implies that Paul had no interest in the Christ who lived here on the earth.<sup>16</sup> This passage is one which is difficult to interpret, and various explanations have been suggested.<sup>17</sup> It is very evident that Paul's contrast was not between the earthly Jesus and the heavenly Christ, but between the fleshly Christ and the spiritual Christ. He says he had once known Christ after the flesh, and he was undoubtedly referring to the time previous to his conversion. At this time he regarded Christ as an impostor, hence he persecuted his followers. Since the time of his conversion he knew a spiritual Christ, whom he worshipped, and to whose service his life was consecrated. Before his conversion he knew this Christ after the flesh, but since his conversion he knew this Christ after the spirit.

It is a question how much Paul knew about the life and teachings of Jesus. There are times when we would expect him to quote the statements of the Master that he did not do it. In his controversy with the Judaizers, the teachings of Jesus would have been unanswerable argument; and the fact that he did not quote the words of the Master concerning unclean meats or traditions would indicate, so some writers contend, that he did not know about this teaching. There is another explanation for Paul's silence which is more probable. The vital issue, raised by the Judaizers, was in regard to circumcision, and Jesus was silent on this question; and the fact that he had been circumcised according to the law, and had said nothing against circumcision would argue against Paul's position rather than in his favor.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Albert Schweitzer (*Geschichte der Paulinischen Forschung*, 1911, p. 191; English translation, 1912, pp. 245 f.) holds that Paul was referring to the earthly life of Jesus, and that he was expressing the general principle that he had no interest in the teachings of Jesus, or in his earthly life. According to Schweitzer, Paul's only concern was in the primitive eschatological beliefs which he had inherited. He suggests an ingenious, but improbable explanation for what he thinks is Paul's lack of interest in the historical Jesus. He says: "It is as though he held that between the present world-period and that in which Jesus lived and taught there exists no link of connection, and was convinced that since the death and resurrection of the Lord conditions were present which were so wholly new that they made his teaching inapplicable."

<sup>17</sup> For a statement of the different interpretations see Int. Crit. Com., II Cor., pp. 177 ff.

<sup>18</sup> H. Weinel ("Jesus or Christ?" pp. 29 ff.) says Paul did not appeal to the teachings of Jesus in his struggle for freedom from the law, because Jesus was thoroughly conservative in his own attitude towards the law.

When we compare Paul's letters with the others which are found in the New Testament, we must feel that Paul was true to his age in the use which he made of the life and teachings of Jesus. He undoubtedly had more to say in his preaching about the historical Jesus than he did in his writings. According to Acts, Paul preached the historical Jesus in about the same manner as did Peter, and Stephen, and Philip; but it is impossible to state just how much of these sermons are the words of Paul, and how much is to be attributed to the author of the book. According to the tradition, related by Irenaeus in the latter part of the second century,<sup>19</sup> Luke secured much of the material for his gospel from the preaching of Paul. He said: "Matthew also issued a written gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and laying the foundation of the church. After their departure, Mark, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. Luke also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the gospel preached by him." This tradition cannot be accepted at its face value as evidence for the sources of the material in our canonical gospels; but there were undoubtedly some historical facts which were the basis of the tradition. These facts which were connected with Paul were: first, the historical Jesus held a prominent place in Paul's preaching; and second, the author of the third gospel was a companion of Paul, and it was from Paul's preaching that he received the inspiration to write a gospel.

While Paul in his writings did not stress the life and teachings of Jesus as we would expect, he did give them a more prominent place than many would have us believe. The references which Paul made to the historical Jesus are all significant.<sup>20</sup> He stated that Jesus was a man without sin (II Cor. 5:21); that he was born of a woman (Gal. 4:4), and according to the flesh, he was of the seed of David (Rom. 1:3). Paul did not say anything about the circumstances of Christ's birth, but it is evident that he thought of him as being the Son of God in a unique sense, for he explained his coming into the world as God sending forth his Son (Gal. 4:4; Rom. 8:3). Paul mentioned the fact that Jesus was betrayed during the night (I Cor. 11:23), and that he instituted the Lord's Supper the same night in which he was betrayed. He stated that Jesus died by crucifixion, and that the Jews were responsible for his

<sup>19</sup> Against Heresies, III:1.

<sup>20</sup> H. Weinel ("Jesus or Christ?" p. 29) holds that Paul tells us enough about Jesus to be sufficient for our Christianity without the Gospels.

death; and that he was buried, and was raised, and after his resurrection made a number of appearances. Paul not only referred to these facts connected with the life of Jesus, but he also made use of his teachings. He called attention to Christ's teaching concerning divorce (I Cor. 7:10), and concerning the right of those who preach the gospel to live of the gospel (I Cor. 9:14). Although Paul's interest was in the heavenly Christ, yet he evidently believed Jesus had lived a real life, and had brothers in the flesh (I Cor. 9:5; Gal. 1:19). In addition to these direct statements, there are many passages in Paul's writings which seem to have been based on the teachings of Jesus.<sup>21</sup> Instead of Paul having no interest in the historical Jesus, he was vitally concerned about some of the incidents in his life. Instead of Paul believing the teachings of Jesus were not applicable to his time, he sometimes quoted them as authoritative.

b. Sources from which Paul derived his knowledge of Jesus.

Whence did Paul derive his information concerning Jesus? is a question which is being asked by many in our day. In I Corinthians (15:3-8) he mentioned the facts of the death, burial, resurrection, and appearances of Jesus, and in emphasizing these facts, he said: "I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received"; but he did not state the source from which he had received that which he delivered. In his teaching concerning the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:23), he said: "For I received of the Lord (*ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου*) that which also I delivered unto you." *ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου* does not determine for us the manner in which Paul received his information.<sup>22</sup> Some writers maintain that on a matter of so great importance as the Lord's Supper, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Paul should have received a divine revelation. Some even regard Paul as the originator of the Lord's Supper, and they insist that he made that claim for himself. It is begging the question to hold that Paul's statement in I Corinthians 11:23 implies that he claimed to have received the historical data concerning the Lord's Supper by means of a vision rather than from tradition. If Paul had received his information through historical tradition, he would have felt that it came from Jesus, and that he was passing it on to others. The historical data concerning the instituting of the Lord's Supper undoubt-

<sup>21</sup> James Drummond ("Jesus or Christ?" p. 198) says striking passages, like the twelfth chapter of Romans or the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians, contain the substance of the teaching of Jesus, though not adhering so closely to his words as do the Gospels.

<sup>22</sup> See *Int. Crit. Com.*

edly came to Paul through the medium of the primitive disciples, and their information came directly from Jesus. Paul must have felt that his interpretation of the significance of the Lord's Supper came from Christ, and in the light of all these facts he could say to the Corinthians: "I received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you."

In writing to the Galatians (1:12), Paul said he did not receive his gospel from men, but it came through revelation of Jesus Christ. As pointed out in a previous section, that statement does not imply that Paul was declaring that he did not receive the historical data concerning the life of Jesus from men. These did not constitute his gospel. His gospel was the conviction that man is justified through faith in Christ, and this came with the revelation of Christ in him, and man had nothing to do with that.

Paul must have had some knowledge of Jesus, and even of his teachings before his conversion. He must have learned something about these from the Christians whom he was persecuting, and a conviction of the possibility of the genuineness of these claims concerning Christ must have been growing upon him, even before his conversion, and this prepared him for the great crisis which came in his life. What Paul had heard about Jesus before this crisis had been no vital part of his thought, or of his life but; the revelation of Christ in him made these facts living and vital, and furnished a sufficient basis for the beginning of his missionary activities. Without the personal experience of the heavenly Christ, the historical Jesus could have meant but little to Paul; but without the historical Jesus as a background, his experience of the heavenly Christ could not have been possible.

Paul had many opportunities to hear about Jesus from the primitive disciples. He must have learned something from the Christians at Damascus, for he visited the Christian community there (Gal. 1:17; II Cor. 11:32, 33), and they would naturally tell him all they knew about their common leader. Early in his Christian career, Paul visited Peter (Gal. 1:18, 19). Peter had been a personal companion of Jesus, and Paul spent fifteen days with him, and it is not possible that they could have visited so long a time without talking over all the events in the life of the Master. Barnabas was for a time Paul's companion in Christian service (Gal. 2:1, 9), and he had been closely associated with the original apostles, and he must have learned about Jesus from them. It is not probable that Barnabas could have been associated with the original apostles without hearing them repeatedly tell about Jesus,

and it is not likely that he could have been associated with Paul without telling him all he remembered of what they had said.

Paul in his writings mentioned nothing about the life of Jesus which he could not have obtained from the primitive Christian tradition, and inasmuch as he had many opportunities to know the primitive Christian tradition, it is natural to suppose that he obtained his information from this source. If the conclusion that Paul received the data concerning the life and teachings of Jesus from the primitive Christian tradition is justified, then inasmuch as he quoted these teachings as authoritative and used these data as historical, it is evident that he regarded this tradition as authoritative.

### *The Death of Christ*

#### a. Its significance for Paul.

Paul's chief interest in the historical Jesus was in his death and resurrection. He made no use of his miracles to prove his greatness, and he cited his teachings only a few times. The Christ in whom Paul was interested was the Savior, rather than the miracle-worker, or even the teacher. Paul was more anxious to know Christ than he was to know what Christ said and did. He was more anxious to lead others to know Christ than he was to tell them about his wonderful deeds, or his sublime teachings. Paul was supremely anxious to bring men and women into fellowship with "Christ's sufferings," and to help them to know the power of his resurrection. His teaching was the "word of the cross," and he desired to know nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified (I Cor. 1:18, 23; 2:2). Paul believed the death and resurrection of Jesus were according to the Scriptures (I Cor. 15:3, 4), and that they were a part of God's great plan. ¶ He said it was the Jews who killed Jesus (I Thess. 2:15), and yet he believed his death was according to the will of God (Gal. 1:4). Paul was convinced that God's purpose in permitting the death of Christ was to bring about the justification of the sinner (Rom. 4:25; I Thess 4:14). He believed Jesus endured the shame of the cross in order that he might bless men, hence the cross is the chief object of the Christian's glory. According to Paul's thought, the death upon the cross was the event of supreme importance in the life of Jesus, and apart from this, his life would have had no significance.<sup>23</sup> It is so evident from a casual reading of Paul's writings, that the death

<sup>23</sup> George B. Stevens (*The Christian Doctrine of Salvation*, 1905, p. 59, in interpreting Paul says: "It was for the direct purpose of dying to atone for the sins of mankind that he came into the world."

of Christ was of supreme concern to him that this subject needs no further discussion.

But when it comes to a statement of what the death of Christ meant to Paul, the task is not so simple, and there is room for differences of opinion. Paul did not have any theory of the atonement carefully worked out, but there are some things in connection with his idea of the death of Christ which seem evident. He believed Christ was the sinless one, but "him who knew no sin God made to be sin on our behalf" (II Cor. 5:21). When Paul made that statement, he evidently meant to convey the idea that when Christ died upon the cross he was passing through an experience which belonged to sinful men rather than to himself, and that he was doing this in order that he might secure salvation for men. Paul regarded the death of Christ as a demonstration of the righteousness of God (Rom. 3:21-26). By setting forth Jesus in his death, God could show himself to be just in having passed over sin, and he could also show himself to be the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus. Christ's death was thus all important in the plan of God.

Paul used three different terms in his references to the significance of the death of Christ, and it is necessary to make a study of these terms in order to understand his position. One of these words is *ἱλαστήριον* which means either a propitiatory offering, or a means of expiation. The most important passage where this word occurs is Rom. 3:25: "Whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forebearance of God." Some writers hold that *ἱλαστήριον* in this passage has the same meaning as in Heb. 9:5, where it denotes the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant.<sup>24</sup> According to this theory, the death of Christ expressed the manifestation of the divine mercy.

This interpretation, however, does not adequately express Paul's thought in this passage, for God set forth Christ in his blood to be a propitiation to show his righteousness. The etymological meaning of the word is, "a means of rendering favorable,"<sup>25</sup> and that is undoubtedly the sense in which it is used in this passage. Paul did not think of God as being satisfied because the blood of Christ appeased him; but his death was propitiatory because it adequately expressed God's wrath against sin, and revealed his grace to the sinner. Paul believed the race had

<sup>24</sup> For a brief discussion of this position see George B. Stevens, *The Theology of the New Testament*, 1910, pp. 412 ff.

<sup>25</sup> See George B. Stevens, *The Christian Doctrine of Salvation*, 1905, p. 62.

been resting under the wrath of God because of sin, and God had been forbearing in the expression of his wrath. Before this forbearance could be changed into forgiveness, God had to be propitiated by an expression of his righteousness. Paul believed that men are saved from the wrath of God by the means of the death of Christ, but it is not probable that he regarded the crucifixion as a manifestation of God's wrath against Christ. Because Christ had suffered the penalty of sin, his death was regarded as a vindication of the wrath of God against sin. Christ was made sin on man's account, and because he suffered the consequences of sin, God's righteousness was vindicated. Inasmuch as the divine righteousness was adequately expressed in the death of Christ, God could, without having his integrity questioned, deal with men on the basis of faith.

Another term which is used in Paul's discussion of the significance of the death of Christ is *ἀπολύτρωσις*, which means: "A releasing effected by payment of ransom; redemption, deliverance, liberation procured by the payment of a ransom."<sup>26</sup> He spoke of the "redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3:24), and he referred to Christ as having been made unto us redemption (I Cor. 1:30). Paul thought Christ' spurious purpose in coming into the world was to "redeem them that were under the law" (Gal. 4:4, 5), and he felt that Christ redeemed men from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for them (Gal. 3:13), and his statement makes it evident that he believed it was in the crucifixion that Christ became a curse. Paul told the Corinthians they were not their own, for they were bought with a price (I Cor. 6:20), and he undoubtedly thought of Christ as being the purchase price. Paul regarded man as having been in bondage to sin and the law, and Christ's death as the ransom price to deliver him from this bondage. By becoming a curse for men and saving them from bondage, Christ purchased men for himself, and hence they owe him eternal allegiance.

The third term which must be considered, if we are to have a correct impression of what the death of Christ meant to Paul, is *καταλλαγή*, which means, "adjustment of a difference, reconciliation, restoration to favor."<sup>27</sup> The most important passage where this term occurs is Rom. 5:10, 11: "For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life; and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation." Another important passage is II Cor. 5:18-21:

<sup>26</sup> See Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*.

<sup>27</sup> See Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*.

"But all things are of God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God. Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him." These passages are so important that they have been quoted in full. The significant question in this connection is concerning the extent of reconciliation. Did Paul mean to imply that God was reconciled by the death of Christ? or did reconciliation include only man? or did it include both God and man? The Corinthian passage seems to place the stress on man's need of reconciliation. In this passage, Paul represents God as being in Christ for the purpose of reconciling the world unto himself. He represents God as entreating men through his ambassadors on behalf of Christ to be reconciled. This, however, expresses God's attitude as a result of the death of Christ, and Paul undoubtedly believed Christ's death served the purpose of reconciling God as well as man. He was convinced that sin was a barrier separating God from man, as well as man from God. The death of Christ removed this barrier, and God could then deal with men on the basis of grace. In the death of Christ, God was reconciled, and he no longer reckoned unto men their trespasses. Since Christ was made sin on man's behalf, it was possible for man to "become the righteousness of God in him." Through his ambassadors, God is entreating men to accept the death of Christ, and live in friendly relationship. The death of Christ was not only an expression of God's wrath against sin, but it was also a commendation of his love for the sinners (Rom. 5:8).

In addition to this judicial statement of the significance of the death of Christ, Paul also had a mystical notion which found frequent expression in his writings. Christ in his death was closely connected with humanity, in whose behalf he was suffering. Paul believed that as Adam represented the natural humanity, so Christ represented the spiritual humanity (Rom. 5:15-19; I Cor. 15:45). When Adam sinned, all sinned; and when Christ died, all died (II Cor. 5:14). Paul believed he shared the experiences of his Lord, and when Christ was crucified, he was crucified with him (Gal. 2:20).

Paul regarded the death of Christ as propitiating God, because it enabled him to express his righteousness; and as a redemption, because

it delivered man from the bondage of law and of sin; and as a reconciliation, because it enabled God to deal with men according to his grace, and it also turned men from an attitude of rebellion to one of love. But while Paul used these judicial terms to describe his view of the death of Christ, he did not think of the crucifixion as being merely a juridical proceeding. It was not merely to cancel guilt, or pay a debt; it was to serve an ethical purpose. Paul thought of the death of Christ as not only saving man from the guilt of sin, but as giving him victory over sin. He believed the individual is so closely united to Christ that he is crucified with him, and that he is also raised with him. Paul did not consider the death of Christ as an isolated event; he thought of it in connection with his life, and he also associated with it his resurrection. He said, "We are saved by his life (Rom. 5:10), and he believed Christ "was raised for our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

b. Sources from which Paul derived his conception of the death of Christ.

(a). His Jewish inheritance.

In making a study of the development of Paul's conception of the significance of the death of Christ, it is necessary to begin with the idea of the Messiah which he had as a Pharisee. Before he became a Christian, he had been looking for a Messiah who was to be the incarnation of power and glory. He was to be so great that he would be able to destroy his enemies by the word of his mouth. There was no place for suffering in his notion of the Messiah, and the crucifixion of Jesus was sufficient proof that he was an impostor. The Messiah could not suffer, and this Jesus had died in dishonor upon a cross. The contribution made by his Messianic inheritance was negative, but as will be pointed out later, this played an important part in the development of Paul's idea of the significance of Christ's death.

Paul inherited from the Jewish religion another important element, which furnished material out of which his concept of the significance of the death of Christ was formed, and this was in connection with the animal sacrifices in the temple worship. It is difficult to state just what these sacrifices meant to the Jews of the New Testament period, but it is quite probable that they emphasized God's displeasure towards sin, and were regarded as a means appointed by God for the purpose of expressing contrition. The sacrifice must have been thought of as being in some sense a substitution. The worshipper who brought his sacrifice felt that God would accept it as a substitute for the obedience which he should have rendered.

There is still another element, which Paul inherited from Judaism, that must be taken into account in making a genetic study of Paul's doctrine of the death of Christ, and that is the prophetic idea of salvation by vicarious suffering on the part of others. The most important illustration of this idea is the suffering servant of Jehovah—passage in Isa. 52:13-53:12. The prophet felt that the faithful were suffering for the wrongs of the disobedient, and he interpreted this suffering as a divine chastisement. Jehovah was making the innocent to suffer for the guilty, and his purpose in this was the saving of the nation. Thus the persecuted remnant, which represents the ideal nation, becomes the savior of the disobedient. It would be easy for one who understood this prophetic idea of vicarious suffering for the deliverance of others to grasp the conception of a divine being suffering for the race.

As a Jew, Paul had believed in a Messiah who was to come in glory to bring in the kingdom of God. According to his thinking, the Messiah was to be so great that suffering would be entirely foreign to him. Paul also believed men could offer sacrifices for sin, and that these sacrifices were pleasing to God. He also felt that it was possible for a nation, and for individuals, to suffer in behalf of others. Any circumstance which would lead him to associate the significance of animal sacrifice and the idea of vicarious suffering with his notion of the Messiah, which he had as a Jew, would lay a good foundation for his doctrine of the death of Christ.

(b) The thought of the Mediterranean world.

In making a study of the development of the significance of the death of Christ for Paul, we must take into account his Greek environment, as well as his Jewish inheritance. The mystery-cults had extended over the Mediterranean world before the beginning of the Christian era, and the idea of redemption through a deity who had died and was raised was prominent in all these religions. The Phrygian cult of the Mother of the Gods, Cybele, and her consort Attis, was known by the Greeks as early as the sixth century B. C., and it was introduced into Rome by an official act of the senate in 204 B. C., and in a short time a temple was erected for the mother-goddess on the Palatine. According to all the myths, Attis died, and Cybele mourned until he was restored to life. His triumph over death was the basis of this Phrygian religion, and around it developed a ritual, which was supposed to bring the same victory to men which the deity had obtained.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup> For a brief discussion of Cybele and Attis, and for a select bibliography of original sources, see "Shirley Jackson Case," *The Evolution of Early Christianity*, 1914, pp. 302 ff.

Perhaps the Egyptian mysteries were more widely disseminated throughout the Mediterranean world, and exerted a greater influence upon the people, than any of the other mysteries. Isis and Osiris were the most important of the Egyptian deities, and Serapis was later introduced. This religion spread over Egypt at an early time, and international relations with the Ptolemies led to its introduction into other parts of the Mediterranean world. These Egyptian deities were worshipped extensively throughout the Graeco-Roman world for two or three centuries before the Christian era. A temple had been erected to Serapis at the base of the Acropolis in Athens. Merchants and sailors carried these mysteries to various centers around the Mediterranean. Serapis was worshipped in Puteoli as early as 105 B. C., as a city ordinance of that year mentions a Serapeum. Isis was worshipped in Pompeii before 63 B. C., for a temple of Isis was destroyed by earthquake that year. These Egyptian mysteries were introduced into Rome, although they were opposed by the authorities. The altars of Isis were destroyed by the senate in 58 B. C. The records show that the devotees of these Egyptian religions were frequently persecuted, but these religions became more popular with persecution. The very frequency of these persecutions indicates their futility. The Egyptian religion became so popular that Caligula built a temple to Isis in the Campus Martius, and Vespasian and Titus passed the night, before their triumphal procession, in the temple of Isis.

The cult of Isis and Osiris was originally a nature religion, and the death and resurrection of the deity typified the change of the seasons. Plutarch gives the fullest account of the myth of Osiris, and, according to his account, Osiris was the good king of the Egyptians, and his death was accomplished by a trick of his brother Set. Isis recovered the parts of his dismembered body, and they were restored to life.<sup>29</sup> According to the various myths, the story of Osiris is that of a deity who died and was raised from the dead. According to one source, the gods say to him: "Though thou departest, thou comest again; though thou sleepest, thou wakest again; though thou diest, thou livest again."<sup>30</sup> The death and resurrection of the deity were represented in a play which was enacted openly, and this must have made a deep impression on those who witnessed it. In earlier times the death and resurrection of the deity were related to the coming of

<sup>29</sup> Plutarch, *Pomp.* 13, 18.

<sup>30</sup> See George Foot Moore, *History of Religions*, 1913, p. 589.

winter and the return of summer, but in the later Hellenistic times they were associated with the experiences of the soul of man. By uniting himself with the deity, the individual might conquer death as Osiris had conquered it.

There were other deities, like Adonis, whose death and resurrection were depicted in the ritual of their worshippers. These religions had a large following in the Graeco-Roman world of Paul's day, and they were especially popular in the great centers like Tarsus. Paul must have seen enacted the dramas which represented the death and resurrection of the deities, and perhaps unconscious to himself, he was influenced by them. It is not at all likely that during his pre-Christian life, he saw any connection between the death and resurrection of these pagan deities and his own Messiah, but an impression had been made which would lead him to make the connection if he should ever face the proper circumstances. Paul was undoubtedly influenced in his doctrine of the death of Christ by the mystery-religions. While the death of the Messiah was foreign to the thought of the Jew, the death of the deity, who was regarded as redeemer, was fundamental in the thought of the Greek who adhered to the mystery-cults. Jesus was for the Pauline Christians the Redeemer who had passed through death to life, and they believed that men and women, by entering into fellowship with his sufferings, might know the power of his resurrection. The Greeks believed that men could enter into fellowship with the deity so that they could share his sufferings and thus participate in his glory. Paul had the same conviction, for he not only believed he had died with Christ, but he also believed he had been raised with him. Some recent writers would lead us to feel that Paul's Greek environment was sufficient in itself to explain his conception of the significance of Christ's death.<sup>31</sup> Paul's Greek environment was important, but there are other elements which were equally important, and to neglect these is to fail to understand him.

<sup>31</sup> Alfred Loisy (*Hibbert Journal*, Oct. 1911, p. 51) in his summary of what Christ meant to Paul, fairly represents these writers. He says: "He was a savior-god, after the manner of an Osiris, an Attis, a Mithra. Like them, he belonged by origin to the celestial world; like them, he had made his appearance on the earth; like them, he had accomplished a work of universal redemption, efficacious and typical; like Adonis, Osiris, and Attis, he had died a violent death, and, like them, he had been restored to life; like them he had prefigured in his lot that of the human beings who should take part in his worship, and commemorate his mystic enterprise; like them, he had predestined, prepared, and assured the salvation of those who became partners in his passion."

(c) Primitive Christian tradition.

Paul must have been influenced in the development of his thought about the death of Christ by the tradition of the teachings of Jesus concerning his own death, as well as by the teachings of the early Christians themselves. He must have heard the Christians whom he was persecuting glorify the Christ who had died upon the cross, and emphasize his death as a part of the divine plan; and while this, at that time, seemed to him like blasphemy, at a later time, when he was passing through a soul struggle, it served to amalgamate his Greek ideas with his Jewish inheritance.

According to our canonical Gospels, Jesus repeatedly referred to his death, and connected it with the salvation of men. He spoke about giving his life a "ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45), and in instituting the Lord's Supper, he designated the wine as "my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto the remission of sins" (Mt. 26:28). In the sermons, recorded in the first part of Acts, the death of Christ is connected with salvation. It is impossible to state to what extent the sayings of Jesus concerning his death, as they are recorded in our canonical Gospels, were influenced by later thought, and to what extent the sermons recorded in the first part of Acts represent the thought of the writer of the book; but from a study of the Gospels and Acts, it seems that one is able to trace a development in the primitive Christian thought of the death of Christ. At first, even the suggestion of the death of Jesus was a stumbling-block to the disciples, and when his crucifixion actually came, their ideals crumbled about them. They had hoped Jesus was "he who should redeem Israel," but when he died upon the cross, they felt they had been deceived. Their conviction that Jesus was alive changed the whole situation. While they still believed the crucifixion was a crime committed by the Jews, they felt that God had overruled their crime for good. They now realized that instead of the crucifixion being a defeat of the divine plan, it was according to God's will, and was for the accomplishment of salvation. In the light of this conviction, they re-read the Scriptures and found that they should have been expecting the very things which had happened, for the crucifixion was according to the "determinate counsel" of God, and the prophets had foretold it.

(d) His own personal experience.

The conception of the Messiah which Paul had when he was persecuting the Christians was completely changed by the experience which he interpreted as a revelation of Christ in him. Having identified the

Christ, who had been revealed in him, with Jesus, who had died upon the cross, and with the Jewish Messiah, it was then necessary for him to reconstruct his thinking about the crucifixion. The cross was a stumbling-block for Saul, the Pharisee; but it became the chief object of glory for Paul, the Christian. Paul's creative personality, by bringing together and reconstructing and unifying the material furnished by a Jewish inheritance, a Greek environment, the primitive Christian tradition about the death of Jesus, and his own wonderful experience, produced a conception of the cross which was different from any that had hitherto been held. It was no longer a stumbling-block, as it was to the Jews, but it was the basis of the world's hope; it was not something which needed to be explained or justified, as it was for the early Christians, but it was the heart of all preaching; it was not merely a suffering deity to give men victory, as it was to the Greeks, but along with that it reconciled God and man. Paul's theory of the death of Christ was not Jewish; neither was it Greek, nor primitive Christian. Elements from all these sources were worked over in the mortar of his own experience by the pestle of his creative personality, and the result was a theory which was peculiarly his own.

While Paul had the Jewish conception of the Messiah, the Greek ritual, depicting the death and resurrection of the deity to make it possible for men to obtain immortality, would have but little conscious influence upon him. He must have frequently compared his Messiah with their savior-god and perhaps almost unconscious to himself, he may have wondered if they could possibly be right, and if the Messiah was really to suffer to give victory to men. This contact with the Greek idea of the savior-god, who died and was raised to make it possible for men to obtain victory, even though the influence was unconscious to himself, prepared him so that when he passed through a great soul-crisis he was ready to accept the crucified Christ, whom the Christians were worshipping. This Greek environment made it easy for Paul to identify the heavenly Christ, whom he believed had been revealed to him, with the crucified Jesus. His Greek environment also helped to determine what the death of Christ should mean to him. The Greek idea of sharing in the death and resurrection of the deity, by being initiated into fellowship with him, became fundamental in Paul's thinking. He believed Christ's death on the cross was his death, and Christ's resurrection was his resurrection.

Paul's conversion to Christianity and his acceptance of the crucified Christ gave many of his Jewish ideas a new significance, but he

still retained these Jewish ideas, and they were an important factor in the development of his thought of the death of Christ. The significance of the death of Christ was very different for Paul than it would have been if he had been a Greek, instead of a Jew. After he had accepted the crucified Christ, he still believed that when he endured the shameful death on the cross he "became a curse," but he felt it was on man's account, and not because of his own weakness or unworthiness. He had been thinking in terms of sacrifice, and he believed Christ had been offered up as a sacrifice for men. His death meant more than the animal sacrifice did to the Jew; God not only accepted it as a substitute for what man should have rendered, but it was at the same time a vindication of the righteousness of God. Paul had thought of God in terms of law, and he never got entirely away from that. Law and experience were combined in Paul's thinking, for the death of Christ was not only a propitiation of God by showing his wrath against sin, but it was also an expression of his love for sinners. Paul's legal training led him to think of Christ's death as a ransom price to redeem man from the bondage of sin, law and death; while his experience of the heavenly Christ, in connection with the notion of the suffering servant of Jehovah, led him to think of it as a vicarious sacrifice for men. The feeling towards God, which came as a result of his Christian experience, convinced him that the death of Christ was a means of reconciliation between God and men. / The God whom he had known under the law was a God of wrath and justice, but the God whom he had come to know through Jesus Christ was a God of love and compassion.

It is not probable that Paul reached his conclusion about the significance of the death of Christ suddenly; it was undoubtedly the development of a lifetime. His conception became richer with the passing of the years, for each new experience modified his theory. Paul took up into his own thinking elements from Judaism, the thought of the Greek world, the teaching of the primitive disciples, his own personal experience, and the experience of others, as he had observed it, and the result was his theory of the death of Christ. It is not probable that Paul had any thought about the sources from which his ideas were derived; he accepted what seemed to him to be the truth, and this became a part of his thinking. Paul was certain that he had the spirit of God, and that he had divine guidance in reaching his conclusions; hence he had no doubt about the correctness of his convictions. He felt as certain about the conclusions to which he had come through a process of reasoning, by taking elements from different sources and working

them into a theory, as he did about convictions which he believed were the result of revelation; the divine spirit had guided him in either case.

*The Pre-existent Christ*

a. Statement of Paul's teaching.

Paul did not attempt to prove the pre-existence of Christ. His references to it are all incidental, but these are more important as indicating his belief than lengthy arguments would be. Instead of attempting to prove the pre-existence of Christ, Paul presupposed it as a belief which was familiar to his readers. Pre-existence is implied in the statement, "God sent forth his Son" (Gal. 4:4; Rom. 8:3). This would indicate that Paul believed Christ had existed with the Father before his appearance on the earth, and that God sent him from that pre-existent state into this earthly life. Pre-existence is implied in the statement: "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor" (II Cor. 8:9). This would indicate that Paul was convinced that Christ had had an existence of wealth and honor before he came to earth, and that his life here was a giving up of his former riches. Pre-existence is implied in the statement that the spiritual rock which followed the Israelites was Christ (I Cor. 10:4). Paul evidently believed the pre-existent Christ was present with the children of Israel, and helped them in their wilderness wanderings. His statement in I Cor. 8:6 would indicate that he believed the pre-existent Christ was the agent in creation.

The classical passage in which Paul emphasized the pre-existent Christ is Phil. 2:3-11. This has been a much discussed passage. Many writers have come to it with preconceived ideas, and hence they have read into it a meaning which Paul did not have in mind. The context shows that he was not discussing the various phases of Christ's existence, but referred to him as an illustration of humility and self-sacrifice. Scholars have differed in their interpretation of *ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ* (Phil. 2:6)<sup>32</sup> Paul was not discussing Christ's relation to the Father while he was in the pre-existent state. He was not even discussing the reality of his pre-existence. He assumed this, and made it the basis of an exhortation to the Christians. Paul urged the Philippians to be willing to sacrifice self for others as Christ had sacrificed himself in behalf of humanity. He said although Christ was in the form of God, yet he was willing to give up his divine honor and glory, and live upon the earth as a man, and while living as a man, suffer the humiliation upon the cross.

<sup>32</sup> For a brief discussion of this passage and its bearing on the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ, see S. Nowell Rostrom, *The Christology of St. Paul*, 1912, pp. 114 ff.

There can be no doubt that Paul believed in the pre-existence of Christ, and that this was not an ideal existence, but was as real as that which he later had on the earth.

b. Sources from which Paul derived his conception of the pre-existent Christ.

(a). His Jewish inheritance.

The Jews had the idea that every person or thing of importance, like the temple or the holy city, had a heavenly prototype before it had its real existence; and some writers have made this the basis for the development of Paul's doctrine of the pre-existent Christ. There seems to have been in the Jewish thought of Paul's day a more striking resemblance to the pre-existent Christ than the one just mentioned. It is almost certain that in later Judaism there was the conception of a Messiah who existed in heaven with God, and was waiting the time of his manifestation on the earth. The most striking expressions of this conception, which have been preserved, are in the book of Enoch. In Sim. 46:1, 2, the Son of Man is represented as one who is with God: "The angel showed me all things concerning the Son of Man, who he was, and whence he was, and why he went in with the Head of Days." He is represented in Sim. 61:7 as having been hidden in heaven before his manifestation on the earth: "The Son of Man was hidden before him, and the Most High preserved him in the presence of his might, and revealed him to the elect." The same idea is emphasized in Sim. 48:2: "He had been chosen and hidden before the Lord of Spirits before the creation of the world and forevermore."<sup>33</sup> It is difficult to state just what conception of the Messiah would be indicated by these and other similar passages which might be cited, but it seems that a popular phase of Messianism was that the Messiah would come from a heavenly pre-existence where he was being kept by God until the day of his manifestation.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>33</sup> The date of the Similitudes of Enoch is uncertain, and some scholars have regarded these statements as Christian interpolations, but Emil Schürer (*Geschichte Des Jüdischen Volkes*, III, 1907, p. 280, Eng. trans. Divis., II, Vol. III, 1891, p. 68) regards these passages as purely Jewish, and he does not think it is necessary to presuppose Christian influence. He says: "The view of the Messiah here set forth is fully intelligible on purely Jewish premises, and does not need for its explanation the hypothesis of Christian influence."

<sup>34</sup> For a further discussion of the Jewish notion of a pre-existent Messiah, see W. Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im neutestamentlichen Zeitalter*, 1903, pp. 253 f. Percy Gardner (*The Religious Experience of St. Paul*, 1911, pp. 184 f.) says: "It has been shown by recent research that the notion of an exalted spiritual Messiah, who was

While it seems almost certain that the Jews believed in a pre-existent Messiah, it is not probable that they thought he would come from his heavenly state to be born as a child; on the contrary, he was to come as the mighty one. If the heavenly pre-existence of the Messiah was a part of Jewish Messianism, then Paul must have held to that before his conversion, and it would furnish him a good starting point for his doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ. Before Paul's conversion to Christianity it must have seemed to him like sacrilege to refer to Jesus as the Messiah. The Messiah was the mighty one, who was being kept in heaven until God's appointed time, and then he was to be manifested in power and glory; but Jesus had come as a child, and had lived as a man, and had died in disgrace. But when Paul was converted to Christianity, he transferred to Jesus all the ideals he had of the heavenly being. It should be said, however, that the Christian Messiah, whom Paul worshipped, was not merely the Jewish Messiah under another name; there were striking differences, and other sources besides the Jewish contributed to Paul's thinking.

(b) The thought of the Mediterranean world.

There were many similarities between the Greek thought of Paul's day and his idea of the pre-existent Christ. In the Hellenistic thought of Paul's time there was an intermediary between God and his world, which was designated as Wisdom or Logos. The problem for the Greek was to make it possible for a good God to have any dealings with an evil world, and this was accomplished through the intermediary. It is stated in the Wisdom of Solomon (10:17) that the cloud which accompanied the Israelites in the wilderness was the Divine Wisdom. Philo of Alexandria had much to say about the Logos as the intermediary between God and the world. He held that the Logos is "the Image of God" (Prof. 19): "The divine Logos is like nothing perceptible,

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to be no mere earthly king and conqueror but a great angelic being, was by no means unknown among the Jews at the time of the birth of Jesus. Such a supernatural Messiah is shadowed forth in the Psalms of Solomon (17, 18), and in the book of Enoch (47). To such thought the Messiah was pre-existent in heaven, waiting to be revealed to men, the prince of angels." W. Wrede (*Paulus*, 1907, p. 87; Eng. trans. 1908, p. 152) is also convinced that Jewish apocalyptic literature makes it certain that the Jews believed in a Messiah, who, before his appearance, lived in heaven and was more exalted than the angels themselves. Gerald Friedlander (*Hellenism and Christianity*, 1912, pp. 1 ff.) is just as certain that the conception of a Messiah, who was pre-existent in heaven, was utterly foreign to Jewish thought, and that all the references in Jewish apocalyptic literature to a pre-existent Messiah are Christian interpolations.

but is itself an Image of God." He designated the Logos as the Son of God (Agr. Noe, 12): "God regulates the nature of the heavens, etc., appointing as their immediate superintendent, his own Logos, his first born son." Philo thought of the Logos, which he designated as God's Image and First-born Son, as being eternal (Conf. Ling. 28): "For even if we are not yet suitable to be called the sons of God, still we may deserve to be called the children of his eternal Image, of his most sacred Logos; for the image of God is his most ancient Logos." It is in the relation of the Logos to the universe and to mankind that the teaching of Philo is the most significant. The Logos is designated as the archetypal pattern according to which the universe was made (Mundi Op. 6): "It is manifest also, that the archetypal seal, which we call that world which is perceptible only to the intellect, must itself be the archetypal model, the idea of ideas, the Logos of God." Philo regarded the Logos as the instrument of creation (On Cherub. 35): "The cause by whom the world was made is God; the materials are the four elements of which it is composed; the instrument is the Logos of God, by means of which it was made." Philo also believed the Logos is the power by means of which God binds the universe together, and controls what he has made (Prof. 20): "It is the bond of all things, and holds together and binds all the parts, and prevents them from being dissolved and separated." Philo did not regard the Logos as an independent force but as a medium between God and his world (Migrat. Abr. 1): "By means of the Logos, the ruler of the universe takes hold of it as a rudder, and governs all things." According to Philo's thinking, the Logos was the archetype for man as well as for the universe (Mundi Op. 48): "For God does not seem to have availed himself of any other animal existing in creation as his model in the formation of man, but to have been guided by his own Logos alone. On which account Moses affirms that this man was an image and imitation of God." It is by the Logos that men are guided and controlled (Mundi Op. 50): "But since every city in which laws are properly established has a regular constitution, it becomes necessary for the citizens of the world to adopt the same constitution as that which prevailed in the universal world. And this constitution is the right Logos of nature, which in more appropriate language is denominated law, being a divine arrangement in accordance with which everything suitable and appropriate is assigned to every individual." What the sun is to the natural world, the Logos is to men. Just as the sun gives life to nature, so the Logos gives life and salvation to the righteous; but it also brings destruction upon the

unrighteous (*Somm. I.* 15): "When he speaks of the sun, he means the divine Logos, the model of that sun which moves about through the heaven. . . . For the Logos of God, when it reaches to our earthly constitution, assists and protects those who are akin to virtue; so that it provides them a complete refuge and salvation, but upon their enemies it sends irremediable overthrow and destruction." Philo thinks the Logos enables men to understand God (*Leg. All. III*, 73): "But we must be content if we are able to understand even his name, that is to say, his Logos, which is the interpreter of his will." He also thinks the Logos is the mediator between God and men (*Quis Rerum Div. Her. 42*): "And the Father, who created he universe, has given to his angelic and most ancient Logos a pre-eminent gift, to stand on the confines of both and separate that which had been created from the creator. And this same Logos is continually a suppliant to the immortal God on behalf of the mortal race, which is exposed to affliction and misery; and is also the ambassador, sent by the ruler of all to the subject race."

These numerous citations from Philo's writing have been made because a survey of the philosophy to which Philo gave expression is indispensable to an understanding of the thought of the world in which Paul lived. A summary of these passages and others which might have been cited will enable us to form a fairly accurate conception of what the Logos meant to Philo. In its relation to God, it is called the Image of God, the Son of God, the Shadow of God, the Reason of God, etc. In its relation to the Powers, it is at the head, and stand next to God. In its relation to the universe, it is designated as the archetype, the instrument of creation, and the universal law regulating and controlling all things. In its relation to man, it is designated as his archetype; as a moral law controlling his relations with his fellowmen; as the interpreter of God's will for him; and as his mediator before God. It is difficult to say to what extent Philo ascribed distinct personality to the Logos, but his statements were of such a character that it would be easy for others to ascribe personality, whether he did or not.

Philo did not create this philosophy; he was merely giving expression to the thought of his age. Paul may never have read any of Philo's writings, but the idea was current in the Greek world that Wisdom, or Logos, was God's means of manifesting himself to men, and that conception was beginning to find entrance into the Jewish world, as is indicated by the "memra" of the Targums. This thought of an intermediary between God and his world must have been current in Tarsus, and

Paul must have been familiar with it. It must have influenced his thinking as a Jew, and when the great upheaval came in his own soul, and he was compelled to reshape his conception of the Messiah, these Greek ideas were given a large place.

(c) Primitive Christian tradition.

It is impossible to state just what the primitive Christian tradition which must have been familiar to Paul, had to say about the pre-existence of Christ. The doctrine of pre-existence is very evident in the Fourth Gospel, but it is a question whether this represents the teaching of Jesus, or whether it is due to a later development in the thought of the church about Christ. The Fourth Gospel is an interpretation of the life and teachings of Jesus, and there is a strong probability that the statements about pre-existence which are made in the body of the book are interpretative, and are used to carry out the purpose as it is stated in the Prologue. The doctrine of pre-existence is not definitely stated in the Synoptic Gospels, but there are some passages which are more naturally explained by assuming that they imply pre-existence. The Synoptic Gospels, however, were not written until after Paul's letters had been penned, and there had been much development in Christology before that time. Although the interpretative element is not so prominent in the Synoptic Gospels, as in the Fourth Gospel, yet it figures in each of these documents, and it may have some bearing on the statements which seem to imply pre-existence. In the sermons that are recorded in the first part of Acts, there is nothing said about pre-existence. It is impossible to absolutely reproduce the thought of the church into which Paul entered. We do not know just what was the Christology of that primitive church, or what it taught about the pre-existence of Christ, as we have no literature which came out of that period. It seems probable, however, that if there was any reference to pre-existence in the early Christian tradition, it was not given much prominence. The tradition which Paul received from the church into which he entered would not be sufficient in itself to explain his conception of the pre-existence of Christ.<sup>35</sup>

(d) His own personal experience.

It was Paul's personal experience which led him to identify the Jewish conception of a pre-existent Messiah, and the Greek idea of the

<sup>35</sup> J. W. Bailey (*Elements of Paul's Christology*, 1905, p. 55) concludes his discussion of the sources which contributed to Paul's thought about pre-existence by saying: "Paul's doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ was not transmitted to him as a tradition of the church, and accepted on the basis of such authority."

intermediary between God and his world, with the Christ whom the Christians were worshipping. He interpreted the experience which led him to make this identification as a revelation of Christ in him. He felt that this Christ whom he had begun to know was too great to have had his beginning with earth; he was the heavenly being, and his earthly career was but a humiliation from his heavenly existence. Paul was led to know Christ in a manner that was just the opposite of that in which the primitive disciples came to know him. They were led gradually to the conviction that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah of God. Paul came to believe in the heavenly Christ first and although he identified him with the historical Jeuses, it was natural for him to continue to think of him in heavenly terms.

While Paul's Jewish inheritance and his Greek environment, along with the teaching of the early Christians, helped to determine the Christ in whom he came to believe, yet it was his own personal experience which led him to bring together these hitherto discordant elements. If Paul had not passed through some great experience, he would have continued to regard Jesus as an impostor, and to believe in a Jewish Messiah who was yet to come. That great experience, which turned him from a persecutor into one of the persecuted, led him to accept the Christ of the Christians, and to ascribe to him the highest ideals of the Jewish Messiah. This new adjustment would lead him to adopt ideas of the Greeks which had hitherto unconsciously influenced him. It is not probable that Paul's doctrine of the pre-existent Christ was definitely formed at the time of his conversion; it was the development of a lifetime, and it was his own personal experience which guided him in the development. As he gave Christ a larger place in his thinking and his life, he placed more stress on his heavenly qualities, and especially on his pre-existence.

### *The Christ of the Future Age*

#### a. Statement of Paul's teaching.

The Christ of the future age occupied a prominent place in Paul's Christology. Paul believed the present order was to pass away, and a new age was to be inaugurated. He believed Christ was to have a prominent part in the inauguration of this new age. The common Jewish designation for the end of the present order, and the inauguration of the new age, was the "Day of the Lord," but in Paul's thinking, Christ was to have such a prominent part that he designated the event as the "Day of Christ" (Phil. 1:6, 10; 2:16; I Cor. 1:8 II Cor. 1:14). Paul

believed that at the end of this age Christ will come in person (I Thess. 2:19). He will be accompanied by the saints (I Thess. 3:13), and he will come with a shout of victory (I Thess. 4:16). He taught that when Christ comes, the righteous dead will be raised, and along with the righteous who are still living at the time of his coming, they will be caught up to meet him in the air to be with him forever. Paul believed that Christ would come at an unexpected moment, and there are many statements in his writings which would indicate that he believed his coming was to be soon (Rom. 13:11, 12; I Thess. 4:15, 17; I Cor. 1:7, 8). He believed that after Christ's coming there was to be a judgment, and that Christ was to have such a pre-eminent part that the place of judgment could be designated as the "judgment seat of Christ" (II Cor. 5:10). In this judgment none will escape, for all must be made manifest. Even the secrets of men will be revealed when the Lord comes, for he will "bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts."

Although Paul believed Christ was to play an important part in the inauguration of the new age, and in the judgment which was to be a part of this great event, yet he believed he was to be subordinate to God, and would act as his representative. Paul believed that when Christ shall have put under his feet the last enemy, which is death, then "he shall deliver up the kingdom to God" that he may be all in all (I Cor. 15:24-28).

b. Sources from which Paul derived his thought about the Christ of the future age.

(a) His Jewish inheritance.

According to the thought of current Judaism, God was to send his Messiah at the end of the age to inaugurate the Messianic kingdom. He would be so great that he would slay all sinners by "the word of his mouth" (Enoch 62:2). The kings and the mighty ones would behold him sitting on the throne of his glory, and they would know that "righteousness is judged before him" (Enoch 62:3). The Messiah was to appear, and then he was to be seated on the throne of his glory (Enoch 69:29):

"For that Son of Man has appeared,  
And has seated himself on the throne of his glory,  
And all evil shall pass away before his face,  
And the word of that Son of Man shall go forth  
And be strong before the Lord of Spirits."

The Jews believed that the Messiah was being concealed by God until the day of his manifestation, and that then he was to come suddenly

from the place of his concealment. The dead were to be raised, and the wicked were to be punished. The righteous dead who had been raised, together with the righteous Jews who were living, were to constitute the Messianic kingdom.<sup>36</sup>

According to the Synoptic Gospels the conception of the Messiah which John the Baptist had in mind was that of a judge (Matt. 3:12): "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor; and he will gather his wheat into his garner, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." John expected Jesus to be the mighty judge, and live apart from men, and because he was compassionate and meek and ate with men, doubts sprang up in the mind of the forerunner, and he sent messengers to inquire of the Master whether he was the Messiah, or whether they should look for another. The disciples failed to understand Jesus, because they were expecting a mighty judge who would condemn and destroy the enemies of God. There were many variations in Jewish Messianism, but all were agreed that the Messiah was the mighty one who would judge the nations. Paul inherited these eschatological conceptions of the Jews, and they formed the basis for the development of his Christian eschatology.

(b) The thought of the church into which he entered.

The personal disciples of Jesus expected him to set up a kingdom in which he would take the place of judge. Instead of carrying out their ideals, he died upon a cross, and consequently they were disappointed and heartbroken. Their conviction that Christ was alive changed the whole situation for them. They became convinced that Christ was coming again, and that he would perform at his second coming what they had mistakenly supposed he would do at his first coming. Jesus had undoubtedly made some statements relating to a future coming and to his work as a judge, and these statements had been passed on to Paul, and he accepted them without question. In writing to the Thessalonians about the condition of the Christians who had died, he said those who are alive at the coming of the Lord will have no advantage over those who are dead, and he said he was making this statement by "the word of the Lord" (I Thess. 4:15). He evidently referred to some statement which he had received as having come from Jesus, and he

<sup>36</sup> For a fuller discussion of the eschatology of later Judaism, see Emil Schürer, *The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, Divis. II, Vol. II, pp. 154 ff.; R. H. Charles, Ar. "Eschatology," Encyc. Bib. Vol. II, pp. 1335 ff.; S. D. F. Salmon, Art. "Eschatology," H. H. B., Vol. I, pp. 734 ff.; or Shailer Mathews, *The Messianic Hope in the New Testament*, 1905, pp. 21 ff.

believed this covered the point raised by the Thessalonians, and he felt that there was no need of further argument, for the statement of Jesus settled the question. Paul undoubtedly received from the primitive Christians some teaching concerning the second coming of Christ, and this influenced him in the development of his thought of the future age. But inasmuch as the thought of the primitive Christians about the second coming of Christ and the part he is to perform in the bringing in of the Messianic era was derived from Judaism, it is impossible to distinguish between what Paul obtained from the primitive Christians and what he derived from Judaism.

(c) His own personal experience.

Judaism alone would not explain Paul's notion of the Christ of the future age. Unless he had passed through some wonderful experience he would not have been convinced that the one, whom he had supposed was an impostor, was in reality the mighty one who is to be the judge of all the earth. In his thinking, he not only went back from the heavenly Christ, whom he had come to know, to the pre-existent Christ, but he also went forward to the Christ, as he is yet to be. The Christ whom he worshipped was too great to have had his beginning with earth, and he was also too great to have his influence end with this present age. When Paul came to know the Christ of God, and had experienced his power in his own life, he realized that there could be none greater than he, and he transferred to him all the glory which the Jewish apocalypticists had ascribed to their Messiah. Paul assigned to the Christ of the future age the highest possible place, with but one exception, and his Jewish training made it necessary for him to safeguard the sovereignty of God. Christian experience led Paul to exalt Christ to the highest possible position, but his Jewish inheritance required him to keep God in the supreme place; hence Christ becomes God's representative to carry out his plans, and when he shall have done this, he will deliver the kingdom up to God that he may be all in all.

### THE NEW LIFE

#### *Statement of Paul's Teaching*

Paul's Christian teaching reached its consummation in the new life of the believer, as all his preaching and writing were for the purpose of leading men into the new life. In making a study of Paul's conception of the new life in Christ, it is necessary to begin with his doctrine of justification; but inasmuch as the relation of the law to justification will be discussed in another connection, that phase of the subject will

be passed over for the present. In Galatians and Romans much space is devoted to a discussion of the doctrine of justification, and in the latter epistle much emphasis is placed upon the new life of those who are justified. Paul held that a man is justified through faith in Christ, and he believed faith is such a vital bond that it unites the believer to him who is the source of the new life. In Paul's thought, this union is so vital that the believer becomes one with Christ. Christ's death becomes the believer's death, and his resurrection becomes the believer's resurrection, and because of this, the power of sin is conquered, and the new life is sustained. When the individual is thus united to Christ, he dies to sin. Baptism symbolizes this union with Christ, and the consequent death to sin and resurrection to the new life. In the act of baptism the individual dies with Christ, and becomes united with him in his resurrection (Rom. 6:4, 5). He also dies to his old self, and is raised a new man. This change is so decisive that the Christian is "dead unto sin, but alive unto God in Jesus Christ" (Rom. 6:11).

Paul was very emphatic in his statements about the blessings and privileges of the new life. In Rom. 5:1-11 Paul discussed the blessedness of the one who is living the new life. He said the one who is justified by faith has peace with God. Through this faith he has access into divine grace, and he rejoices in the "hope of the glory of God." The one who has entered into the new life rejoices even in his tribulations, because of the love of God which has been shed abroad in his heart through the Holy Spirit.

Paul held that the one who is united to Christ by faith is freed from sin (Rom. 6:1-23). He argued that the believer is not only united to Christ in his death, but also in his resurrection; that being true, the crucifixion of Christ becomes the crucifixion of the old life of the believer, and the resurrection of Christ becomes the resurrection to a new life of the one who has become united to Christ by faith. This crucifixion means death to sin, and this resurrection means the new life in Christ. The one who is united to Christ by faith has the impelling force of Christ within, and this gives him victory. Because of this union with Christ, Paul urged the Christians to holy living. Inasmuch as the Christian is united to Christ, he must not let sin reign in his body. While he was the servant of sin, he presented his members to sin to be used as weapons to fight the battles of unrighteousness; but now, being the servant of Christ, he must present his members unto God to be used as weapons to fight his battles.



In Rom. 7:1-25 Paul discussed the relation to law of the one who is living the new life, and his conclusion was, that by virtue of his union with Christ, the believer is freed from law; hence he may "serve in newness of the spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." The one who is living under law finds it difficult to do right because he is in bondage to sin, and the law is not able to give him victory. The one who is living the life of faith finds victory, because Christ to whom he is united makes him free.

In Rom. 8:1 ff. Paul discussed the relation to death of the one who has entered into the new life, and his conclusion was that he is free from the law of death. If Christ dwells in a man, his spirit is life itself and death cannot touch it. The believer has been made victor over death because of the assurance which he has of the resurrection. Belief in the mere existence of the spirit would not have satisfied Paul, for he felt that the spirit must be clothed with a body. Paul declared, that if a man have the spirit of God, he need have no fear of death: "But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his spirit that dwelleth in you."

Paul believed that the one who is united to Christ by faith has the divine Spirit dwelling within. He did not regard this as a figurative expression, but it was for him a real entity. Paul declared that if any man does not have this Spirit within, he does not belong to Christ; and he further declared that as many as follow the leading of this Spirit, are sons of God (Rom. 8:9, 14). He made a sharp distinction between the natural man and the spiritual man. The natural man is the one who does not have the Spirit within, and he lives according to the flesh. The spiritual man is the one who has the Spirit within, and this overcomes the flesh and gives life to his own spirit. Paul did not definitely distinguish between the Spirit, and the indwelling Christ, and the Spirit of God (See I Cor. 15:45; II Cor. 3:17), but this power within was something that was very real to him. He felt that this Spirit within not only gives one victory over sin, but it also assures him of sonship, and aids and comforts him in his life, and even enables him to pray as he ought.

In addition to his argument, based on the believer's union with Christ, Paul made use of rewards and retributions as motives to holy living (Rom. 6:23). He argued that man should seek to be free from sin, because its wages are death; and he should seek to be in the right relation to Christ, because that means eternal life. He warned the

Corinthians of the dangers of disobedience by citing the example of the Israelites (I Cor. 10:1-13). Paul sometimes pictured the new life in eschatological terms. The glorious life is in the future, and this present life is a waiting for that. The Christian's citizenship is in heaven, and he is waiting for the Lord Jesus to come from thence, and change this body and make it conform to Christ's glorious body (Phil. 3:20, 21). The future rewards and punishments are certain. The one who sows to the flesh shall reap corruption, and the one who sows to the Spirit shall reap eternal life (Gal. 6:7, 8). Paul's eschatological ideas helped to determine his conception of the new life, and he sometimes spoke of this life as a waiting for Christ, who is to come to receive us.

As an incentive to the new life, Paul held Christ up before the Christians as an example for their imitation. Christ is the Master, and when one surrenders his life to him he should seek to become like him. In urging the Romans to help the weak instead of seeking to please themselves, he cited the example of Christ, who pleased not himself but was willing to bear the reproaches that belonged to others (Rom. 15:1 ff.). In urging the Philippians to humility, he pointed them to the example of Christ. He did not refer to any particular incident connected with his earthly life, but to his earthly life as a whole: though existing in the form of God, he emptied himself and lived a life of humility on the earth (Phil 2:5-11).

#### *Sources from which Paul Derived his Conception of the New Life*

##### a. His Jewish inheritance.

Paul's Jewish training made both a negative and a positive contribution to his conception of the new life in Christ. Because of his Jewish training, it was natural for him to think of the religious life as ethical in its demands, and because the law did not give him power to live up to its demands, he was prepared to accept something else, and to glorify it if it should give him victory. Paul's Jewish eschatology led him to interpret the Christian life in terms of the future. The Jews believed their sufferings were the result of their disobedience, and they further believed that if the nation would keep the law, the Messianic era would be ushered in. Some of the Pharisees declared that if the nation would keep the law for one day the Messiah would come. It was in accordance with that Jewish conviction, that John the Baptist preached repentance as a preparation for the coming of the kingdom. Participation in the Messianic kingdom was a great incentive to the Jew to right living. It was natural that Paul's Chris-

tian thinking should be colored by his Jewish training, and that he should sometimes interpret the Christian life from the eschatological point of view. It was natural that he should think Christians are not citizens of earth, but they have their citizenship in heaven, and this life is to be lived in preparation for that.

Paul evidently believed the Scriptures were written to help Christians to live the new life. He argued that the law could not justify a man, and that one who has entered the new life has been freed from the law, and he included the whole Old Testament system under the term "law." But while Paul did not find in the Old Testament system that which would produce the new life, he did make use of it in urging men to right living. In warning the Corinthians against the dangers of disobedience, he cited the example of the Israelites (I Cor. 10:1-13). After calling attention to the punishment which God had inflicted on the Israelites because of their disobedience, he said: "Now these things happened unto them by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come." This would seem to indicate that Paul believed everything in the old order was for the sake of those who are living in the new. When God punished the Israelites because they committed fornication and practiced idolatry and murmured against him, he was thinking not merely of their good, but he was providing examples for those who should live at the end of the ages.

b. The life and thought of the Mediterranean world.

There are many striking similarities between Paul's conception of the new life and the ideas of the mystery-cults. Paul's notion of the Christian's union with Christ, and his having the divine Spirit within, has its counterpart in the mystery-religions. In a prayer to Hermes, which is found in a papyrus which is now in the British Museum, are the words: "*σὺ γὰρ ἐγώ καὶ ἐγώ σύ.*" The same formula, which identifies the individual with the deity, is found in a Leyden papyrus. One of the most striking differences between the national religions and the mystery-cults was in regard to the relation of the individual to the deity. In the religions that were national in character, the individual attached himself to the national group, in order that he might claim the help and protection of the god; but in the mystery-religions the individual sought to attach himself directly to the deity. It was believed that this union with the deity could be brought about through certain initiatory rites, which usually pictured the deity's conquest of death. The nature and significance of these rites were expounded by

the priest, and everything that was done was intended to impress the initiate with the reality of his union with the deity into whose service he was entering. The initiate into the mystery-cult believed he had been born again, and that he was a new man. He believed the deity dwelt within him and controlled his actions.<sup>37</sup> The one thing which supremely concerned the initiate into the mystery-cult was victory over death, and he believed union with the deity, who had conquered death, would assure him this victory.

Judaism was a national religion, and it emphasized the importance of the individual keeping in touch with the national group, by obeying their laws, and keeping their ceremonies, in order to win the approval of Jehovah. The Jew might think that Jehovah helped by his Spirit, but he did not think of being united to Jehovah, or of having Jehovah dwell within him. These mystic ideas were foreign to his thinking. These ideas were, however, prominent in the mystery-cults, and as these religions had permeated the Mediterranean world before the time of Paul, he must have come in touch with them. Inasmuch as Paul's conception of victory over sin and death through union with Christ had its counterpart in the mystery-cults, and was not found in Judaism, it is safe to assume that he was influenced by these religions. His idea of the religious life was perhaps modified somewhat by Greek thought before his conversion, and this may have been one of the influences which helped to make him dissatisfied with Judaism; but he was constantly under the influence of Greek thought during his missionary activities, and his conception of the new life was developed in this environment. Paul's Jewish inheritance and his Greek environment were important factors in the development of his thought about the new life, but these alone are not sufficient to explain his conception.

### c. His own personal experience.

While Paul's Jewish training and his contact with the Greek world furnished the basis for his Christian experience, there was something which these would not explain. The experience which resulted from the

<sup>37</sup> A quotation from an article by Shirley Jackson Case in the *Biblical World*, Jan. 1914, on "Christianity and the Mystery-Religions" brings out in a very striking manner the idea of the individual's union with the deity: "The one to be initiated had previously observed stated rites of purification, and after initiation he took part in further ritualistic ceremonies such as eating the sacred meal, passing the night in the temple bedchamber, or other acts which were thought to typify or secure union with the god. Thus the worshipper experienced a new birth. He was a god-man, for the deity dwelt in him and controlled his life."

surrender of his own personality to Christ was an important factor, and to neglect this is to misinterpret Paul. In his discussion of the blessedness of the one who is united to Christ by faith, he was undoubtedly thinking of his own experience. He knew that such a one has peace with God, for he had experienced this peace. He knew that the man who is united to Christ by faith could rejoice even in tribulations, for he had passed through tribulations, and he had counted them all joy. His statement that the believer is dead to sin was no mere theory with him; it was a conviction that was the result of the new life he had been living. Paul referred to himself as one who had died and had begun to live again, and the explanation of this new life was the fact that Christ had begun to live in him (Gal. 2:20). When Paul looked back over his life, he realized that he had experienced a wonderful change. Old things had passed away, and all things had become new (II Cor. 5:17). He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and in his zeal for the law, he was a Pharisee. He was a persecutor of the church. He had once reckoned these things as gain, but he now counted them as loss, for Christ had changed his attitude towards life. Paul knew from his own experience that Christ is able to dominate and control one's life.

The indwelling Christ was the inspiration of the new life which Paul was living, and he assumed that the new life which he had experienced was possible for all. He assumed that the power which had transformed him would transform others, and that this transformation could come in no other way. Paul believed it was possible for anyone to become united to Christ by faith, and for this union to be so vital that Christ would dwell within. He knew from experience that Christ had been formed in him, and he was anxious for others that Christ should be formed in them.

The ethical conception of the religious life as a preparation for the Messianic era, which came to him through his Jewish training, and the mystical conception of union with the deity for the purpose of obtaining victory, which came to him through his contact with the Greek world, helped to determine the character of his Christian experience; but a new element entered in which gave these old forms a new content. Under the influence of a powerful personality which had been surrendered to Christ, elements, derived from Jewish and Greek thought, were blended with other elements, which came out of his own personal experience, and the result was Paul's conception of the new life.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Shailer Mathews (*The Messianic Hope in the New Testament*, 1905, p. 206), who holds that Jewish eschatology influenced Paul very largely in his Christian

### FUTURE THINGS

Paul's teaching concerning future things naturally falls into two general divisions; namely, the progress of the gospel, and the ushering in of the new age.

#### *The Progress of the Gospel*

##### a. Statement of Paul's teaching.

In his thinking about the progress of Christianity, Paul's supreme concern was in regard to the relation of the Gentiles and the Jews to the gospel, and in stating this relationship, he gave his theory of the future of the church. He believed God was rejecting the Jews and choosing the Gentiles, and he knew he must have had a purpose in what he was doing, and that purpose was the establishment of a universal religion. God did not intend Christianity to be either a Jewish or a Gentile religion; it was to be a religion of all people, and his great purpose was to unify these antagonistic elements. God was not rejecting all the Jews, for some of them were becoming Christians; but the Gentile converts so far outnumbered the Jewish that it could be said that he was rejecting the Jews as a nation, and was choosing the Gentiles in their stead. God was calling enough of the Jews so that Christianity would not break with the past, but would be tied up very definitely with the old faith; but he was calling so many of the Gentiles that it was evident that Christianity was not intended to be a Jewish religion. The rejection of Christianity by so many Jews would tend to make it acceptable to the Gentiles, while its acceptance by a remnant of the Jews would tend to bridge the chasm between these two widely separated peoples. Paul believed it was by the fall of the Jews that salvation had come to the Gentiles, but he believed this fall was only temporary, for the zeal of the Gentiles would provoke the Jews to jealousy, and they would ultimately turn to Christ, and thus both Jews and Gentiles would be won for Christianity. There is a lengthy discussion of this subject in the 9th, 10th and 11th chapters of Romans.

While Paul taught that God was rejecting the Jews and choosing the Gentiles for the accomplishment of a great historic purpose, yet he believed that the Jews were responsible for their own rejection, and that the Gentiles had made it possible for God to choose them. According to Paul, God's method of justification from the beginning was

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thinking says: "Eschatology is not the material but the form of Paulinism." He believes the element which was fundamental in Paul's conception of the new life in Christ was his own Christian experience.

on the basis of faith. The law was only a stage in the working out of God's plan which was to reach its culmination in Christ, and because the Jews misunderstood God's plan and sought justification on the basis of law, he was unable to use them. Inasmuch as the Gentiles responded to the gospel of faith, God was able to use them for the accomplishment of his purpose.

While Paul believed God was rejecting the Jews as a nation, yet he believed the individual Jew could accept Christ if he would, and he was zealous to win as many of them as possible. He said there is no distinction between the Jew and the Greek, and "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Paul believed in the ultimate triumph of the gospel. The great mass of the Jews might reject it for a time, but finally both Jews and Gentiles would turn to Christ.

b. Sources from which Paul derived his conception of the progress of the gospel.

(a) His Jewish inheritance.

As has been previously indicated, the idea of God which Paul had when he was a Pharisee would make his doctrine of divine election natural to him, and his argument in Rom. chaps. IX-XI is based on Scripture passages. He showed from the Scriptures that the rejection of the Jews and the choosing of the Gentiles did not indicate that God had changed his plans, but his course then was in perfect harmony with what his attitude had been during the past (Rom. 9:6-13). He argued that according to the Scriptures, it is the children of promise that are the children of God, and not the children of the flesh. Not all the children of Abraham were included in the promise made to his seed, "but in Isaac shall thy seed be called." He showed from the Scriptures that this promise was narrowed still further: Isaac, who was the child of promise, had two sons; but Jacob was chosen for the accomplishment of God's purpose, and Esau was passed over. He showed how this choice was dependent entirely on the will of him that did the choosing, for when it was said, "the elder shall serve the younger," the children were not yet born, and hence they had not done anything either good or bad. To make the divine will in this election stand out more prominently, Paul quoted a passage from Malachi (Mal. 1:2, 3): "Jacob I loved but Esau I hated."

Paul realized that his doctrine of the rejection of Israel might seem to make God unrighteous, and he sought to meet this objection with examples from the Old Testament history (Rom. 9:14-21). These illus-

trations which he cited show that God was free to do as he pleased. In reply to the question—"Is there unrighteousness with God?" Paul replied: "God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." This passage is quoted from Ex. 33:19, and in its historical connection, it has little bearing on divine election. It is a part of the reply to Moses, after he had made the request that Jehovah would show him his glory and the passage states that Jehovah will be gracious to Moses even though the request is not granted in the manner he had desired. Paul used this language because it suited his purpose, and not because of the teaching of the passage, and he based upon it the conclusion that God arbitrarily chooses the one on whom he wishes to show mercy: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy." He also cited the example of Pharaoh, whom Jehovah raised up for the accomplishment of his purpose: "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, for this very purpose did I raise thee up, that I might show in thee my power, and that my name might be published abroad in all the earth." This is a quotation from Ex. 9:16, and it is a free rendering of the passage, and it is used in a manner that would best serve his purpose. The Septuagint expresses the thought that Jehovah preserved Pharaoh for the accomplishment of his plan, but Paul said it was to that end that he was raised up. Paul rendered the passage in a manner which would enable him to carry the divine election back to the beginning of Pharaoh's reign, and thus present a more striking example of arbitrary choice. Paul did not say anything about Pharaoh's opposition to God being the cause of his punishment, but he thought of him as having been raised up for the purpose of showing God's power: "So then he hath mercy on whom he will, and whom he will be hardeneth."

Paul sought to meet the objection that God has no right to find fault with those whom he rejects, if he chooses whom he desires (Rom. 9:19-21); and while he did not quote Scripture to prove this point, his argument was evidently based on the Scriptures (See Rom. 9:21,22 and Isa. 45:9; 29:16; 64:8; Jer. 18:6). God's right to deal with his creatures as he pleases is based on his sovereign power: as the potter has the right to make the kind of vessel he chooses from the lump of clay, so God has the right to use his creatures as he desires to carry out his great eternal plan.

Paul quoted Scripture to prove his contention that it was according to God's plan that the Gentiles should accept the gospel, and that

the majority of the Jews should reject it. God's purpose in calling both Jews and Gentiles was "that he might make known the riches of his glory upon the vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory" (Rom. 9:23). He quoted two passages from Hosea to show that God had announced beforehand that the Gentiles would be included in his plan, and he quoted two passages from Isaiah to show that it was only a remnant of Israel that would be called (Rom. 9:27-29).

Paul quoted Scripture to prove that the Jews were responsible for being rejected, and that the Gentiles had made it possible for God to choose them. He argued that Christ proved to be a stone of stumbling to the Jews, since righteousness is through faith, while they sought it by works. To substantiate this he quoted a passage from Isaiah, introducing it with the statement, "even as it is written" (Rom. 9:32, 33). He showed that it is according to the Scriptures that the gospel should be preached to the Jews, and that when it was preached they would be disobedient and rebellious (Rom. 10:18, 21).

Paul quoted Scripture to prove his argument that God's purpose in rejecting the Jews was to win the Gentiles, and then, through the zeal of the Gentiles, provoke the Jews to jealousy, and thus win all for Christ (Rom. 10:19, 20). He also used the Scriptures to prove his argument that God, in rejecting the unbelieving Jews, had not cast off his people, but he had preserved a remnant for the working out of his plan (Rom. 11:1-10). His final quotation of Scripture in this connection was to prove his philosophy of the future, that the hardening of Israel was to bring in the fullness of the Gentiles; and that when that time comes, Israel will turn to the Lord and all will be saved (Rom. 11:25-27). This is a composite quotation, and the two passages used were put together so that they would best serve his purpose.

A study of Paul's argument in Rom. chaps. IX-XI must convince one that he did not get his doctrine of God's plan for the future from the Old Testament, or from any other part of his Jewish inheritance, for it was contrary to the spirit of Judaism. After Paul had stated his conviction, which was derived from other sources than Judaism, he then proceeded to quote one or more passages of Scripture to prove it. To accomplish his purpose he sometimes used the Scriptures in an arbitrary manner. He sometimes took a passage out of its connection, and put a meaning into it which was foreign to its original import; and he sometimes brought together remote passages, and used the composite as proof-texts. This use of the Scripture would indicate that Paul considered it authoritative, but it would also indicate that there was for

him an authority which was more vital than the Scripture. It was not through his reading the Old Testament that Paul reached his conclusion about the future progress of the gospel; it was through other influences that he worked out his philosophy, and then he reread the Old Testament, and found the things for which he was looking.

(b) The life and thought of the Mediterranean world.

The Jews of Palestine regarded the Gentiles as a people in whom God had no interest; they were dogs without a master. Paul's contact with the Gentiles before his conversion must have convinced him that some of them were more worthy of God's approval than were many of the Jews. He must have understood the prevailing religions of the Graeco-Roman world, and when he became a Christian and realized that justification is on the basis of faith, he must have felt that Christianity would be more acceptable to the Gentiles than to the Jews. Paul knew that the people of the Mediterranean world were supremely interested in religion, and that they were seeking deliverance through faith in a dying and resurrected deity; and when he had been led to a belief in a Christ who had died and had been raised for man's justification, he must have realized that this gospel would be popular with the Greeks, and that before the Jews would accept it in any large way, their conception of religion would have to be changed.

(c) The life and thought of the church into which he entered.

It is impossible to state just what the attitude of the church into which Paul entered was towards the future spread of the gospel. Did the primitive Christians expect the whole Jewish nation to turn to Christ? or did they think it would be only a faithful remnant that would accept the gospel and be saved? Did they believe the Christian blessings would be enjoyed by the Jews only? or did they feel that the Gentiles would accept Christ and the Jewish law, which would make them a part of God's chosen people? or were there some who had the wider outlook, and believed the gospel was for Gentiles as well as Jews? It is impossible to answer these questions definitely, but if the account in Acts is accepted as giving a fairly accurate picture of conditions in the early church, Stephen was Paul's forerunner and believed in a religion which was broader than the nation. It is quite probable that Paul disputed with Stephen in the synagogue of "them of Cilicia" (Acts 6:9), and that this disputation convinced him that Stephen blasphemed against Moses and against God. It must have been some such experience as this which made Paul the leading persecutor of the early church. He saw that Christianity and Judaism were opposed to each other, for

he believed the success of Christianity meant the destruction of the law. This could have been nothing more than the basis for the working out of his theory, but it did undoubtedly raise questions in his mind concerning God's relation to the Jews. His sympathetic knowledge of the religious life of the Greeks, and his understanding of the religious life of the Jews and of their Scriptures, along with the interpretation of Christianity which was given by the more liberal group of the Christians, prepared him for the later development of his great doctrine.

(d) His own personal experience.

Paul must have been impressed with the fact that from the very first the Jews had been antagonistic to Christianity, while the Gentiles, whenever they had the chance, were favorable to it. He was confronted with the fact that the Jews had rejected Christ, and had forced the Romans to put him to death. He was confronted with the further fact that it had been the Jews who had opposed him in his missionary labors, while the Gentiles had received his message. Although the Jews were his own kinsmen according to the flesh, and his love for them was so strong that he could wish he himself were anathema from Christ for their sake, yet they rejected him and the message he brought. Although to the Israelites belonged "the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises"; although to them belonged the fathers, and even "Christ according to the flesh," yet the gospel which he preached only antagonized the great mass of them.

The fact that the Jews were rejecting Paul and the gospel which he preached would seem to indicate that his gospel was not from God, for inasmuch as the Jews were God's chosen people, they would certainly be the ones to receive the gospel which Paul was preaching, if it were from God. Paul knew from his own experience that the gospel which he was preaching was divine, for God had revealed it to him, and he knew there must be some other explanation of the fact that the Jews were rejecting it, and he found that explanation in the great plan which God was working out. Paul felt that God had been carrying out the divine plan in his own life. He had separated him from his mother's womb, and had called him by his grace to the work of the gospel. The call had been so forceful that it could not be resisted (Gal. 1:15).<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> J. R. Cohu (*St. Paul and Modern Research*, 1911, p. 278) says Paul believed God's will was absolute in working out the divine plan in his life. He said Paul believed God moulded him according to his own purpose, and in spite of his opposition.

Paul did not regard his case as exceptional, but he believed God was dealing with all mankind as he had dealt with him.

The great divine purpose, as Paul conceived it, was fundamentally the result of his own experience. His Jewish training and his missionary activities had convinced him that the relation between Jews and Gentiles was so antagonistic that the Gentiles would reject Christianity, if the Jews as a nation should accept it. In order that Paul could get a start in a new community, it was necessary for him to find a group which had some common religious ideas with himself. He found such a group in the Jewish synagogue. A few of the Jews accepted his message, but most of them opposed him. On the other hand, the proselytes were enthusiastic and brought in other Gentiles to hear him. The result was that in a short time Paul and his followers, having been driven out of the synagogue by the Jews, organized a church which was composed of both Jews and Gentiles, the Gentiles being in the majority. Paul's experience must have convinced him that if the majority of the Jews in a community should accept the gospel and convert the synagogue into a church, the new movement would then be regarded as Jewish, and the Gentiles would hold themselves aloof. Paul regarded himself as the apostle to the Gentile world, but his special love was for the Jews, and his heart's desire and supplication to God was for them that they might be saved. It was doubtless his ambition to win the Jews of the Dispersion, as well as the Gentiles, for Christ; but the opposition of the Jews and his success with the Gentiles convinced him that God was working out his great plan in a different manner than he had at first anticipated.

Paul's conviction that both Jews and Gentiles would ultimately be won for Christ must have resulted largely from his own experience. The fact that Jews and Gentiles, in the various communities where he had labored, had been united by faith in Christ, and were working together in harmony, convinced him that it would be possible for the Gentiles and the Jews to become one in Christ. Perhaps the zeal of the Gentile Christians in many communities had caused the Jewish Christians to become more zealous for their own countrymen, and Paul was convinced that this would ultimately be the result for the whole nation.

Paul's experience must have been one of the most formative factors in producing the conviction that the Jews were responsible for God's rejecting them, and that it was on account of something that the Gentiles had done that God had chosen them. Paul knew from his Jewish

training and his Christian experience that Christianity was fundamentally different from Judaism. The Jews were seeking the religious life through law, and they would naturally oppose anything which seemed to minimize the importance of law. God could not use them for the accomplishment of his purpose, because they could not appreciate his method of saving the world. Paul knew from his own Christian experience and from his contact with the Greek world that there was much in common between Christianity and the Greek religions. The Greeks were seeking the religious life through faith in the deity, and they would naturally welcome a higher type of faith-religion. God was able to use the Greeks for the accomplishment of his purpose, because they were able to appreciate his method of saving the world. It was because the message of righteousness which is of faith made no appeal to the Jews, that God was not able to use them for the carrying out of his great plan, and it was because this message did appeal to the Greeks that God chose them to take the place of the Jews.

Paul's Jewish training and his Greek environment, together with his contact with the more liberal type of Christian thinking, prepared him for his acceptance of Christianity, and for the conviction that Christianity was for the Greeks as well as for the Jews. These things also prepared him for a realization of the fact that the gospel was more acceptable to the Gentiles than to the Jews. The problems for which this training prepared Paul were raised and solved in the school of experience, and the result was his doctrine of the future of the church.

### *The New Age*

#### a. Statement of his teaching.

Paul did not attempt to give a definite statement of his conception of the future age. His teaching on this point was practical, rather than speculative, and it was incidental to the main purpose in his letters. But from his many references to the new age, it is possible to determine quite definitely what his belief was. He regarded the present age as evil (Gal. 1:4), but he believed it would pass away (I Cor. 7:29-31). Paul believed this present age is to a large extent dominated by Satan and his hosts, but he believed their power would finally be broken. After this evil age shall have passed away, a new age will be inaugurated in which the will of God will prevail. This new age will be inaugurated by a crisis which he designated as "the Day of the Lord." God will usher in the new age by sending his Son from heaven (I Thess. 3:13). He will descend from heaven "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (I Thess. 4:16). At the time of

his coming there will be a resurrection of the righteous dead, and the righteous who are living at that time will be changed, and they shall all be "caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air" (I Thess. 4:16, 17). It is evident from Paul's earlier epistles that he expected the parousia to be soon. The present age, because of its sin and suffering, is designated as "night," but "the night is far spent and the day is at hand" (Rom. 13:11, 12). Paul made some statements which would seem to indicate that he meant to include himself among those who would be alive at the time of Christ's coming (See I Thess. 4:15 ff.; I Cor. 15:51 ff.). Paul's later writings do not place as much stress on the parousia as do his earlier ones, and some have concluded that he developed in his eschatology, so that he was not expecting the immediate return of the Lord.

The resurrection held a prominent place in Paul's thought, and because of existing conditions, it was discussed at length in I Corinthians and I Thessalonians. Paul had evidently given the impression to the Christians at Thessalonica that the Lord's coming was to be soon and that it would be a blessed privilege to participate in it; but some of their number had subsequently died, and they believed they would sustain a great loss in the final advent (I Thess. 4:13-15). Timothy doubtless reported their perplexity to Paul, and this furnished one of the occasions for the letter. The situation in the Corinthian Church was somewhat different. There were some in this church who denied the resurrection, and in the fifteenth chapter of I Corinthians, Paul discussed the resurrection at some length. The idea of the resurrection which Paul presents in the two letters is the same. When the last trump sounds the righteous dead will be raised. It will all take place in an instant—"in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." They will be raised incorruptible, and they will be changed into the likeness which they are to have in the new age. Paul seems to have believed in immortality apart from the resurrection, but it was a vague and indefinite sort of existence. Apart from the resurrection, man's spirit exists in a disembodied or unclothed state, and Paul shrank from the thought of that (II Cor. 5:4). He gave a very interesting discussion of the heavenly body in I Cor. 15:35 ff., and he presented the idea that the heavenly body will not be the same as the earthly body. He held that as God gives to each plant, animal, and star the kind of body which it needs for its existence, so he will give to the soul the kind of body that will be best adapted to its heavenly existence. According to Paul's thinking, there will be a close connection between the natural

body which is sown, and the spiritual body which shall be raised; but they are different bodies, for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

In connection with the parousia there will be a judgment, and at the time of the judgment, each one will receive according to what he has done (II Cor. 5:10). This is to be a judgment of punishment unto death for the unrighteous (Rom. 5:16, 18), and of acquittal unto life for the godly (Rom. 5:16, 17; 8:1). The judgment will be a time of wrath, but the righteous need have no fear, for Christ will deliver them (I Thess. 1:10). God will be on the judgment seat (Rom. 14:10), and each one will be required to appear before him to give an account of even the secret things (Rom. 2:16). Christ is to be connected with the judgment, and he is sometimes represented as the judge (I Cor. 4:4), and the place of judgment is sometimes designated as "the judgment seat of Christ" (II Cor. 5:10). Paul believed God would judge all men according to the gospel which he had been preaching, and Christ would be the standard of judgment (Rom. 2:16).

After judgment shall have been pronounced, and death shall have been conquered, so that there shall be no longer any enemy for the righteous, then Christ shall deliver up the kingdom to God. When Christ shall have put all his enemies under his feet, and shall have subjected everything to the will of God, then he will subject himself to God, so that he may be all in all.

All this would seem to imply an intermediate state extending from the time of death until the day of the Lord, but Paul made many statements which would seem to indicate that he also had a different conception. He spoke of death as a departure to be with Christ, and he said this departure was far better than a continued earthly existence (Phil. 1:23). Paul felt that when one left the body he went to be with Christ (II Cor. 5:6-8). To be at home in the body is to be absent from the Lord, and to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord, and Paul believed it was better to be with the Lord than to be in the body. These passages would indicate that Paul had the feeling, at least sometimes, that instead of passing into an intermediate state to wait until the day of the Lord, the believer goes directly to be with Christ.

b. Sources from which Paul derived his conception of the new age.  
(a) His Jewish inheritance.

Almost everything Paul said about future things can be duplicated from Jewish eschatology. Paul was familiar with Jewish eschatology

before he became a Christian, and unless these Jewish ideas were modified by other influences, they continued to represent his Christian thought. The Jews believed this present age is evil, and is to a large extent controlled by Satan and the evil spirits, but they were convinced that it was to be of short duration, and that it would be followed by the new age which was to be perfectly good, and in this new age God's will was to be done. The Jews believed the new age was to be introduced by the coming of the Messiah who was to judge the enemies of God. It was easy for Paul, as it was for the other Christians, to transfer these Jewish ideas to the second coming of Christ. According to Jewish belief, the righteous Jews who had died would be raised and would be permitted to share with the righteous Jews who were living in the Messianic glory. The Jews believed that between the time of death and the resurrection the soul would have a cheerless existence in Sheol. During this intermediate period it would exist in a naked state, being without a body. This unclothing of the soul by its separation from the body in which it formerly had its existence was caused by death, and the Hebrew shrank from that. The Hebrew conception of death included something more than that experience which closes this earthly existence, or the separation of the soul from the body; they thought of it as the separation of the soul from God. That notion formed the background for Paul's statement in II Cor. 5:1-4, but the rest of the passage shows that his Jewish thought about death had been materially changed by other influences.

(b) The thought of the Greek world.

Paul's ideas about the future life undoubtedly reflect the influence of the thought of the Greek world.<sup>40</sup> Paul's conception of the spiritual body is more like the thought of the Greeks than of the Hebrews. The Hebrews believed in a bodily resurrection, and they felt that the life in the future age was to be something like the life in this age, with the exception that everything was to be idealized. That conception of the future furnished the basis for the question about the resurrection which the Sadducees put to Jesus. This was undoubtedly a stock question which they hurled at their antagonists, and the Pharisees, because of their materialistic conception of the future, were unable to answer them. The mystery-cults emphasized immortality through union with the deity. The deity who had conquered death for himself would give victory to

<sup>40</sup> Percy Gardner (*The Religious Experience of St. Paul*, 1911, p. 127) says: "The eschatological views of Paul mark a transition from purely Jewish to Hellenistic nations."

mortals who were initiated into fellowship with him. The Greek idea of the flesh would forbid the thought of bodily existence; immortality was the thing the Greek was anxious about. Paul's idea of the future life seems to have been a combination of Greek and Hebrew thought. He no longer believed in a resurrection of the same body which had been placed in the tomb; neither was he satisfied with mere immortality, for that was to leave the soul in an unclothed condition, and his Jewish nature shrank from that. He believed God would provide a spiritual body which would be adapted to spiritual existence. Instead of there being a resurrection of the body which had been placed in the tomb, he believed God would change the old body as he changes the grain which has been sown into the new plant (I Cor. 15:42-44): "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."

As pointed out above, Paul appears to have had two different conceptions of the state of the soul between death and the parousia. In the earlier writings, especially I Thessalonians and I Corinthians, he expressed the conviction that the righteous dead are resurrected at the time of the parousia, and then changed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body, and then they pass into the presence of God. In some of the later writings, especially Philippians, he expressed the conviction that instead of the soul waiting until the parousia to receive its new body, it passes at once into the presence of Christ. Many writers hold that Paul changed his conception of the resurrection, and inasmuch as one idea is set forth in I Corinthians and a different idea seems to be intimated in II Corinthians, some hold that the change took place in the interval between these two letters.<sup>41</sup> It is impossible to fix as definitely as some have done the time when Paul changed his conception of the future life, but it is evident that the Jewish idea of an intermediate state, in which the unclothed soul waits for the body which is to be given at the parousia, did not continue to satisfy him. Greek thought played an important part in producing this change in Paul's feelings about the future, but the change could not be explained on the basis of Greek thought alone.

(c) The thought of the church into which he entered.

When Paul told the Thessalonians that those who were alive at the time of the coming of the Lord would not precede those who were fallen

<sup>41</sup>Otto Pfleiderer (*Urchristentum*, 1887, pp. 161, 293, 298) thinks the change was due to the fact that during this time he became acquainted with the literature of Alexandria.

asleep, he said he was speaking by the word of the Lord (I Thess. 4:15). It is not probable that he meant to be understood as saying that he had received a revelation from the Lord concerning the parousia, and that he was communicating this to the Thessalonians for their comfort and assurance. He was evidently referring to some oral tradition of the teaching of Jesus bearing on this point.<sup>42</sup> The eschatological discourses of Jesus, as they are given in the Synoptic Gospels, have much in common with the eschatological sections in Paul's writings, but, as has been previously indicated, it is impossible to tell just how much these discourses were modified by the thought of the writers.

According to the accounts given in the first part of Acts, the early disciples were expecting an immediate setting up of the kingdom, and they were expecting it to be in Jewish fashion. When they saw Jesus after his resurrection, they asked him if he would at this time restore the kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:6). When these same disciples were looking into heaven after their ascended Lord, the two men in white apparel assured them that he should "so come in like manner as they had beheld him going into heaven" (Acts 1:11). According to the account given of Peter's sermons, the motive which he urged for repentance was that they might thus help to prepare the way so that the Lord would come (Acts 3:19-21): "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; and that he may send the Christ who hath been appointed for you, even Jesus: whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restoration of all things." The book of Acts was not written until after Paul's day, and the material was undoubtedly colored by the thought of later times, but it is almost certain that the early disciples expected Christ would soon come to set up his kingdom, and when he should come, the wicked would be destroyed, and those who had accepted him would be saved. Paul received these ideas, and he was influenced by them in the development of his thinking.

(d) His own personal experience.

Paul did not attempt to give a systematic statement of his view of future things, but in his references to the future, he was moved by the practical impulse. The practical significance of Paul's eschatology is manifest, when it is compared with the speculations of the Jewish

<sup>42</sup> H. A. A. Kennedy (*St. Paul's Conception of the Last Things*, 1904, p. 97) gives parallel passages from Paul's writings and the Synoptic Gospels to show that Paul was influenced by the tradition of Jesus' teaching concerning the parousia and the judgment.

apocalyptic writings. The details which are so conspicuous in the Jewish apocalypses are very few in Paul's writings. Paul's Christian experience did not produce as striking a change in the Jewish eschatology which he inherited as it did in some other phases of his thought, and that is to be expected, as eschatology is to a large extent outside the realm of experience, and is presented to the mind by pictures, and these pictures become fixed.<sup>43</sup> These pictures would naturally remain, unless they were modified by other influences which became a part of experience.

Paul's statements concerning the future were positive in character, as he did not discuss the speculative questions upon which many were thinking. His interest was eternal life. This had been made certain, and that certainty rested upon the experience of the living Christ, who had become the first fruits of them that are asleep. Paul's union with the Christ, who had conquered death, had made immortality certain to him. Death had no more terrors for him, but it would mean his release from the body in order that he might be present with the Lord. The mystery-cults must have influenced Paul, but this conviction was worked out in his own experience, and hence it was different from that of the Greeks. Paul's conversion-experience must have influenced his thought of the resurrection. He was convinced that he had seen the heavenly Christ, and he believed he would one day become like him. Paul had experienced salvation through Christ, and he knew this would be perfected at the parousia (Rom. 13:11). Complete salvation, the foretaste of which he had already experienced, would include the redemption of the body (Rom. 8:23). Paul had experienced, the transformation of his Spirit into the likeness of Christ's Spirit, and he knew that his body would be changed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body (Phil. 3:21).

#### SUMMARY

If we have correctly represented Paul, our study of the doctrinal elements in his epistles shows that he was influenced in the development of his thought from many different sources. His Jewish training formed the background for every Christian doctrine, and although what he inherited from Judaism was modified by other influences, much of it remained as a vital part of his thinking. The fact that he retained these Jewish elements and used them in his Christian teaching indicates that he believed truth could be derived from the Jewish religion; but

<sup>43</sup> See H. A. A. Kennedy, *St. Paul's Conception of Last Things*, 1904, p. 36.

the fact that he modified and even rejected some of his Jewish inheritance would indicate that there was something outside of Judaism which was for him authoritative, and which determined what he should accept, and what he should reject. Inasmuch as Paul quoted the Scriptures to prove his argument, and quoted them as ultimate proof, it is evident that he regarded them as authoritative. He believed he could derive truth about God, man and his world, Christ, the new life, and future things from the Scriptures, and that others could derive truth from the same source. His use of the Scriptures, however, would indicate that there was something else which was for him authoritative, and which determined the use which he made of them. There were other influences, along with the Scriptures, which led him to his conclusions, and he used the Scriptures to prove these because they were regarded as authoritative, but he sometimes took the passages quoted out of their connection and read his own meaning into them.

Much that came out of Paul's Greek environment became a part of his Christian thinking, and his doctrine was very different from what it would have been, if he had been a Palestinian Jew instead of a citizen of the Graeco-Roman world. He evidently believed he could derive truth from the thought of the Greeks, but inasmuch as this Greek thought was changed and transformed by other influences, there was evidently something besides the thought of the world in which he lived which was for him ultimate authority, and which helped to determine the use which he made of the influences which came from the life and thought of his world.

Paul was influenced by the thought of the church into which he entered, and his Christian doctrine cannot be explained apart from that. He believed he could derive truth from the primitive Christians, and especially from their traditions about Jesus. But inasmuch as the doctrines of the primitive church were much modified in Paul's thinking, there must have been something apart from the primitive church that was really authoritative for him, and this determined the use which he made of the teachings and traditions of the early disciples.

That which was fundamental for Paul in the development of his Christian doctrine was his own personal experience. His Jewish training furnished the basis for the development of all these doctrines. This Jewish training, and his Greek environment, and the life and thought of the primitive disciples helped to determine his Christian experience, but they do not fully explain it. Paul's conception of Christianity was not Jewish; neither was it Greek, nor primitive Christian; it was

not merely a combination of all these; it was peculiarly his own. It was worked out in the school of experience under his wonderful creative personality. Jewish training, Greek environment, and contact with the primitive Christian thought furnished him the material, but this was reconstructed so that the result was Paulinism. The experience which he interpreted as a revelation of Christ, and the daily experience which he interpreted as union with Christ, or the indwelling Spirit, and his great purpose of winning the Gentile world for Christ, were important factors in the development of his thought, and he was guided by these in the use which he made of his material. Ideas about God, man and his world, Christ, the new life, and future things, if they contributed to his experience, or did not conflict with it, were accepted whether they were Jewish, Greek, or primitive Christian.

## CHAPTER III

### PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL TO THE GENTILES

The preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles inevitably raised some perplexing problems. Christianity began in a Jewish environment, and it had to adapt itself to new conditions when it was planted in the Gentile world. Many of the Jewish rites and ceremonies were repulsive to the Gentiles, and many of the practices of the Gentiles were an abomination to the Jews, and when Christianity included both Jews and Gentiles it had to face the task of unifying these antagonistic elements.

#### THE RELATION OF THE LAW TO THE GOSPEL

It was inevitable that the question of the relation of the law to the gospel should be raised as soon as Christianity passed beyond the borders of Judaism. Primitive Christianity was Jewish. According to Acts, the Jewish Christians observed the national feasts and holy days (See Acts 2:1; 18:13; 20:6, 16). They participated in the worship of the temple and the synagogue. They prayed at the customary hours. They observed the fasts and underwent voluntary abstinence, binding themselves by special vows, like all pious Jews. They scrupulously avoided all unlawful foods and all legal defilement. They had their children circumcised.

All these Jewish rites and ceremonies were foreign to the life of the Gentiles, and they constituted the great barrier between them and the Jews. Paul and his co-laborers realized that to insist on these Jewish regulations would be a hindrance to their work, and they must have realized that if they disregarded these regulations entirely they would be in danger of breaking with the mother church. The situation was made more complicated by the fact that the Christian communities in the Gentile world were composed of both Jews and Gentiles. If Jewish rites and ceremonies were imposed on the Gentiles, but few Gentiles would become Christians; if Jews were denied the privilege of their rites and ceremonies, none of them would become Christians, and they would bitterly oppose the church; and if the Gentiles became Christians without keeping the law, and if the Jews who had become Christians still insisted on all keeping the law, there could be no fellowship in these churches. If the Jewish Christians insisted on the privilege of adhering rigidly to all Jewish requirements, it would be difficult

to maintain fellowship in these mixed churches, for it would be necessary for them to regard the Gentile Christians as unclean; they could not visit in their homes; they could not even sit down with them at the Lord's Table.

Paul went to the Gentiles and preached the gospel of justification by faith, and imposed no Jewish ordinances whatever. The Gentiles received his gospel with joy, but a Jewish element in the church strenuously opposed the innovations which Paul was making. The point at issue was, not whether the Gentiles should be admitted as Christians, but on what conditions they should be admitted. Paul held that the Jewish ordinances should not be imposed on the Gentiles, while his antagonists insisted that the Jewish covenant was eternal in its demands, and that no one could be saved who refused to conform to the requirements of this covenant. The Judaizers were willing that the Gentiles should be received into the church providing they would keep the Jewish regulations in addition to the Christian.

It was natural that the Jewish Christians who believed in the eternal validity of the law should bitterly oppose the gospel which Paul was preaching, and it was just as natural that he should zealously defend it.

#### *Statement of Paul's Position*

Paul's chief concern, in his discussion of the relation of the law to the gospel, was for the Gentile Christians. He did not object to the Jews keeping the law, and it is very probable that he continued to keep it himself, but he was determined that it should not be forced on the Gentiles. The significance of the law for Paul was determined by its relation to justification. If the law could save a man, it might then be valuable to the Gentiles; but if the law cannot save, and there is something else that can, then its present value is questionable.

In all his writings Paul insisted that justification cannot be on the basis of law. Before one could be justified by law it would be necessary for him to keep every part of it, for to fail in one point is to be guilty of all. Inasmuch as it is impossible to keep the whole law, it is evident that God never intended it to be a means of justification. Paul asserted that his righteousness was not of the law, but through faith in Christ (Phil. 3:9), and he rebuked the Galatians for thinking about turning to the law, since they had received the Spirit by the hearing of faith (Gal. 3:3, 4). In the first part of Romans he showed that justification on the basis of law is a failure, and he then said (Rom. 3:21, 22): "But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested,

being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe." Paul argued that justification by faith was not something recent, for Abraham was justified by faith, and he lived before the law was given (Rom. 4:1 ff.; Gal. 3:6).

Unless otherwise defined *νόμος*, as it was used by Paul, denoted the Mosaic law, and when he used the article he made it very specific that he meant to designate the Mosaic law. When Paul referred to the law of Moses, he was evidently thinking of the system as a whole and not of any single part. The whole Old Testament system was for him a single code, and he believed it had failed to justify and should not be made binding on the Gentiles.

The question regarding the purpose of the law was inevitably raised by Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. He urged that the inheritance was not of the law, and that the law could not justify, and yet it had to be reckoned with, for it was the greatest heritage of Judaism, and it had been divinely given. What was the purpose of the law if it was not to justify? This question was before Paul's mind when he wrote to the Galatians, and it holds a still more prominent place in his letter to the Romans. The statement that justification is through faith in Christ would seem to set the law aside, and make God's work during the past appear to be a failure, but Paul believed the law had held an important place in the working out of God's great plan.

Paul developed his doctrine of the law under the influence of his Christological ideas. Inasmuch as God's ultimate method of justification is through faith in Christ, the law must have been a preparation for that. It was "added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made" (Gal. 3:19). The law threatened transgressors, but it could not give victory. The law failed to secure its own ends, because it was external in character. It could threaten punishment, but it could not justify, and inasmuch as it could not give a man victory, it must have been preparatory for something else which would give victory. If the law could make alive, there would be no need of the gospel of faith; but inasmuch as it could not do that, it must have been preparatory for him who could make alive.

Instead of the law making alive, it showed the helplessness of mankind; it demonstrated the fact that all are under sin, and because of this demonstration, "the promise of faith in Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." The law was not final; neither was it a failure according to its original purpose; it was to help humanity till "the

seed" should come. It was a pedagogue to bring men to Christ (Gal. 3:24), and when men had been brought to Christ, the work of the pedagogue was completed.

Paul believed the law prepared for Christ by increasing the knowledge of sin (Rom. 3:20). The law makes it plain to a man that the things which he is doing are sins (Rom. 7:7): "I had not known sin, except through the law: for I had not known coveting, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Paul evidently believed sin was in the world before the law was given, but men did not know it was sin (Rom. 5:13), and the purpose of the law was to compel men to know what sin is. Because the law taught men what sin is and then failed to give them power to overcome it, it was a preparation for Christ, who could give victory.

Paul seems to have believed that the law not only increased the knowledge of sin, but that it actually multiplied sin (Rom. 5:20): "And the law came in besides, that the trespass might abound." He felt that sin, which dwells in the members, and which is naturally antagonistic to the law, became more active when the law was given (Rom. 7:7, 8). The purpose of the law was not to save sinners; but it was to multiply sin, in order that the guilty conscience might be more completely delivered over to the grace of God. Its purpose was not so much to help man as it was to make him realize his helplessness and his absolute dependence on God.<sup>1</sup>

Notwithstanding the fact that the law could not justify, Paul asserted that it was divine in its origin (Gal. 3:19), and in its nature was "holy, just, and good" (Rom. 7:12). He insisted that the law is not sin (Rom. 7:7), but is spiritual (Rom. 7:14), and its failure is due to the fleshly, sinful nature of man (Rom. 7:3). He believed the law would have been able to give victory if man had been different, but inasmuch as man's nature was sinful, what was intended to be unto life was found to be unto death (Rom. 7:10). Paul did not believe God had failed in his plan, or had made a mistake. He was convinced that God knew all things from the beginning, hence he must have known before he gave the law that men would be unable to keep it, and his purpose must have been to place men under sin and show them their helplessness, so that he might have mercy on them.

<sup>1</sup> H. Weinel (*Paulus*, p. 7; Eng. trans., p. 9) perhaps exaggerates this conception of Paul when he says: "Paul is the great discoverer of the fact that God and the law are contrary, the one to the other, and that the only way in which the law can lead to God is by becoming our torment and awaking in us a longing for escape."

Paul believed the law was done away in Christ (Gal. 3:19, 24, 25), for when the Master came the pedagogue was no longer needed. He believed Christ, by introducing justification by faith, brought the law to an end (Rom. 10:4), and he felt no loss had been sustained, because while that which passed away was glorious, that which remained was much more glorious (II Cor. 3:11).

*Sources from which Paul Derived his Notion of the Relation of the Law to the Gospel*

a. His Jewish Training.

As a Jew, Paul had thought much about what God demands of those who are acceptable to him. He regarded the law as a revelation of God's will, and he believed those who kept the law were acceptable to God. He tried to keep it, and "as touching the righteousness which is in the law," he was found blameless (Phil. 3:6). Paul must have felt in those days before his conversion that he had had some success in keeping the law, and that he had been benefitted by it. He must have felt that the law had been a great blessing to the Jews, and that it had been a restraining power in their lives. He must have been familiar with some of the higher motives which the law urges as a basis for obedience (Ex. 19:4), and he must have been familiar with the fact that the law demands purity of heart and morality, as well as outward conformity to ritual.<sup>2</sup> But the legalistic conception of religion prevailed among the Jews of Paul's day, and his soul must have become weary of the unceasing round of ceremony and ritual. He must have realized

<sup>2</sup> R. Travers Herford (*Pharisaism*, 1912, pp. 175 ff.) criticises Paul very severely for his condemnation of the law. He says if Paul had given his estimate of Judaism while he was still a Pharisee, his criticism would have been valuable, but inasmuch as his statements were made after he had left Judaism, he thinks his estimate is naturally prejudiced. He says: "A convert seldom takes the same view of the religion he has left as is taken by those who remain in it." Herford challenges Paul's statement that the law does not give victory. He says: "Paul's universal negative challenges the contradiction of all the saints, martyrs and heroes of Israel." Herford criticises Paul's position that the law was a burden to the Jew because he regarded it as so many commandments he had to keep, and holds that instead of the Pharisee regarding the precepts of the law as so many commandments he had to keep, he regarded them as so many opportunities to serve God. He says: "If there was ever a Pharisee in such a state of despair that he should cry, 'O miserable man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' he would think of the Torah not as the cause of his anguish, but as the hope of his deliverance. And it was the Torah itself which kept him from ever falling into such despair; for it was God's own word of help and guidance, the record of his endless mercy, the revelation of his love."

at times that the law did not satisfy him, and he perhaps longed for something that would bring victory and peace. This Jewish appreciation of the law and of its shortcomings was a decided preparation for his theory of the relation of the law to the gospel.

b. His Greek environment.

Paul's life in the Greek world must have convinced him that there were some Gentiles who had done better without the law than had many Jews with the law. He had seen the uncircumcised keep the law while the circumcised failed to keep it (Rom. 2:26, 27). He had doubtless seen many Gentiles who were living upright lives, and who apparently had a peace and assurance which he had not found. This would be an important contribution to his later conviction that a man is justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, and it would be a still more important contribution to the conviction that the Gentiles should not be required to keep the law.

c. The life and thought of the church into which he entered.

Paul's contact with the Christians whom he was persecuting must have convinced him that they had something which he did not have. They had a peace and confidence in their suffering which he did not have in his triumph. He must have realized that their peace and assurance were not due to the fact that they had kept the law, for he knew he had kept it more faithfully than had they. He must have associated their peace with their new religion, and while at first he believed their attitude was due to their fanaticism and stubbornness, he later began to wonder if their new religion had not done something for them which law had failed to do for him. This helped to prepare him for his renunciation of Judaism, and for his declaration that a man is justified by faith, and not by the works of the law.

d. His own personal experience.

Paul's pre-Christian experience had convinced him that it is impossible for a man to keep the whole law. He had believed in the law and had done his best to keep it, but he realized that he had failed (Rom. 7:7 ff.). The more he studied the law the more conscious he became of his own failure, for instead of the law helping him, it pointed out his shortcomings. He knew the law was good, and his experience convinced him that his failure was due to sin which dwelt in his members.

When Paul became a Christian, his basis of justification was changed. Instead of being law or merit, it was faith in Christ. Through faith in Christ he had found what law could not give him, and he had seen

Gentiles who had been guilty of the grossest sins transformed through this faith. Faith in Christ not only gave him victory over sin, but the peace which had come into his soul convinced him that this faith had made him acceptable to God. In the light of this new experience, his conception of the law was completely changed. He realized that there was no place for law in his new life, and as he looked back over his past experiences, he felt that law had been a burden rather than a help. Paul was thus led from a position of confidence in the law, and admiration for it, to a position of criticism.

It is not at all probable that Paul, before his conversion, would have agreed with the criticism which he later passed upon the law. It is not probable that he realized his failure, before his conversion, as he did afterwards. He looked back upon his Pharisaic days in the light of his Christian experience, and things looked different to him from what they once did. His training in Jewish law, and especially in rabbincism; his experience in trying to keep the law, and his observation of the failure of others who tried to keep it; his contact with the Greeks who had found victory apart from the law; and his opposition to the Christians who had found peace and happiness in Jesus Christ, prepared him for the soul struggles which led him to forsake the law and consecrate his life to a proclamation of the gospel of faith in Christ. His new experiences contrasted with the failures of other days led him to deny the validity of the law as a means of making men righteous. But while Paul's new experiences led him to criticise the law, he never got entirely away from the old feeling of reverence for it, and as a result he made statements which would seem to contradict each other.

Paul believed in justification by faith, as the result of his own personal experience, and he sought to establish others on the basis of their experience. In his attempt to confirm the Galatians in their Christian liberty so that the Judaizers could not unsettle them, he appealed first of all to what faith had meant to them. He reminded them that they did not receive the Spirit by the works of the law but by the message of faith, and he urged them not to be disloyal to their own experience (Gal. 3:1-3). He appealed to their experience of the special manifestations of the Spirit's power as an indication that justification by faith had divine approval. He asked them how they received the Spirit which enabled them to work miracles. This question would imply that these Galatian Christians had been performing these wonders before the Judaizers came into their midst, and that the Judaizers did not add

any power which they did not have before, for it was not by the works of the law but by the hearing of faith that they had received the Spirit which enabled them to do these things.

In defending his doctrine of justification by faith, Paul made frequent references to the Old Testament, and his argument which is based on the Scriptures is very ingeniously wrought out. A careful study of his use of the Scriptures in this connection must convince one that instead of deriving his conception of justification by faith from the Old Testament, it came to him through his experience, and then he used the Old Testament to prove it. One of the most striking passages in which Paul used the Old Testament to confirm his doctrine of justification by faith is the third and fourth chapters of Galatians. He read the doctrine of justification by faith back into the Old Testament, and maintained that Abraham was justified by faith and not by works of law, and that being true, the real sons of Abraham are those who are of faith (Gal. 3:6, 7). This, he urged, was according to the plan of the Scriptures, for when it declares that the gospel was preached to Abraham that in him all nations should be blessed, it was foreseeing the fact that God would justify the Gentiles by faith. Paul said this promised blessing could not have referred to those who are under the law, for "as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse." He substantiated this statement by a quotation from Deut. 27:26 "Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things that are written in the law to do them" (Gal. 3:10). The passage quoted implies that a person ought to keep the law, and that a curse will rest upon him if he does not keep it; but Paul knew from his own experience and from the experience of others, as he had observed it, that no one is able to do all the things that are written in the law, and hence he concluded that it puts a man under a curse.

Paul insisted that it is evident from the Scriptures that a man is not justified before God by the law (Gal. 3:11, 12). He was quoting from Hab. 2:4 when he said: "The righteous shall live by faith." He used this passage as though the prophet had had his doctrine of justification by faith in mind, while in reality Habakkuk was thinking of something that was entirely different. Paul said the law is not of faith, and the only way a man can live under law is by doing the things which it requires (Gal. 3:12). He was quoting from Lev. 18:5 when he said: "He that doeth them shall live in them," and the discussion which follows shows that Paul believed it is impossible for one to do the things

required by the law, hence it brings death instead of life. Lev. 18:5 emphasizes the fact that the Israelites should keep the statutes and ordinances of Jehovah, and it is implied that it is possible for them to keep these requirements, and they are assured that if they do them they shall live in them. Experience had convinced Paul that the keeping of all the statutes was an impossible task, and while the law promised a blessing to those who kept it, it is really a curse, for it is impossible for any one to keep it. Paul held that Christ redeemed us from this curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, and he quoted Deut. 21:23: "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," to prove his argument. He took this passage out of its connection and read a meaning into it which was foreign to its original import. Paul's purpose was to prove that the law is a curse instead of a blessing, and that Christ freed men from it; hence the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, can receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. He was influenced largely by his own personal experience in reaching this conclusion, and he used the Scriptures very freely to prove his contention.

Paul was rabbinical in the use which he made of the Old Testament to show that the promise to Abraham was not a promise to Jews only (Gal. 3:15, 16). He said the promise was not to Abraham and his lineal descendants, but it was to Abraham and one that was to come through him: "He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed which is Christ." The Old Testament promise which Paul cited undoubtedly referred to the lineal descendants of Abraham and not to a particular person who was to come through him. "Seed" in the Hebrew is a collective term, and is frequently used in the singular to mean descendants. Paul used it in that sense in Rom. 4:18, although in order that he might make the Genesis passage accomplish his purpose in Gal. 3:15, 16, he said it could not have that meaning.

In his use of the Scriptures to prove that inasmuch as the promise was made to Abraham four hundred and thirty years before the law was given, the gospel is fundamental, Paul did violence to the historical sense of the passage. He argued that the law had nothing to do with the covenant with Abraham, for the promise was made before the law was given; but according to the Old Testament, circumcision, which was the rite that Paul was opposing, was the basis of the covenant with Abraham.

Paul allegorized an historical incident to prove his contention that those who are seeking justification by faith are the real children of Abraham. He admonished them that desire to be under law, to hear

what the law has to say, and by means of allegory, he read into the passage a meaning which is the opposite of what it was intended to teach (Gal. 4:21 ff.). After relating the Genesis incident of the two sons of Abraham, and calling attention to the fact that the son of the handmaid was born after the flesh while the son of the free woman was born according to promise, he said these things contain an allegory. By means of this allegory, he attempted to show that the Jews who were seeking to be justified by law were like the son who was born after the flesh; while those who were seeking to be justified by faith were like the child that was born according to promise. The women who were the mothers of these two children represented the two covenants. Hagar was used as a type of the covenant from Mount Sinai, bearing children unto bondage, and Mount Sinai "answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with her children." Those who are justified by faith have as their mother the Jerusalem which is above, which is free. Paul argued that those who were seeking to be justified by faith were children of the promise, as was Isaac; and as Isaac was persecuted by him who was born after the flesh, so the children of promise in his day were being persecuted by those who were children of the flesh. Just as the handmaid and her son were cast out, so God was accepting the children of faith and was rejecting the children of the flesh. In his use of the Scriptures in working out this allegory, Paul overlooked the fact that it was the descendants of Isaac to whom the law was given, and that they were the ones who were in bondage to the law.

The conclusions which Paul sought to establish in the third and fourth chapters of Galatians were not derived from the Old Testament; they were the result of experience, and the Old Testament was used in the most arbitrary manner to prove them. In his discussion in Romans of the relation of the law to justification, Paul used the Scriptures very much as he had done in Galatians. Having shown from experience that justification is not by works of the law, he sought to prove that this conclusion was in harmony with the divine plan, for it was witnessed by the law and the prophets. He discussed the justification of Abraham in much the same manner as he had done in Galatians (See Rom. 4:1 ff.).

In seeking to prove the superiority of justification by faith in Christ to justification by law on the ground that faith is within while the law is external to one, Paul quoted Scripture in the most arbitrary manner possible (Rom. 10:5-8). His statement is undoubtedly based on Deut. 30:11-14, and the purpose of this passage is to teach that the law is

not too difficult for people to keep; for it is not something that is afar off, but it is in the heart. "It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." It is made emphatic in this passage that it is not difficult to keep the law, for it is not afar off; it is not up in heaven, or over the sea, but it is in the heart. Paul's contention was that the law is external, and hence it can not lead one into righteousness, and he used this Scripture to prove it. To make this passage accomplish his purpose, he substituted faith where the passage intended law: "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith which we preach"; and it is evident from the next statement that Paul was thinking of faith in Christ in contrast with the letter of the law: "Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."

Paul did not always correctly represent the historical value and purpose of the law, and it would have been impossible for him to have reached his conclusions from a study of the Old Testament itself. It was other influences, the most important of which was his own personal experience, which led him to his convictions, and he then read these back into the Old Testament, and used it to prove his argument.

Paul was not always consistent in his statements concerning the significance of the law.<sup>3</sup> Paul did not write as a theologian, and he did not try to be consistent. He wrote as a religious teacher, and he expressed his feelings in his writings, and in emphasizing one phase of a subject, he sometimes lost sight of other phases. Paul's great purpose was to defend his doctrine of salvation through faith in Christ, and at the same time to justify the existence of the law. His own personal experience, which began as a result of his Jewish training, his knowledge of the life and thought of the Greek world, his contact with the early disciples, and his experiences during his missionary activities among the

<sup>3</sup> Percy Gardner (*The Religious Experience of St. Paul*, 1911, p. 46) says: "At one time he speaks of it as holy, just, and good, the direct gift of God to Moses. Sometimes he speaks of it as marking a passing stage in the development of man, but now outworn and ready to pass away. Sometimes he even seems to regard it as provocative to sin, and unable to help a man in the trouble into which it leads him."

Gentiles, furnished the basis for his doctrine. Guided by this experience, he reasoned out his conception of the significance of the law, and its relation to the gospel, and he then read his ideas back into the Old Testament. Paul was always consistent on one point, and that was the basis of justification, for his experience had convinced him that a man is justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law. He was not always consistent in his discussion of the purpose of the law, for that is not so definitely within the realm of experience, and his conclusions were determined somewhat by the purpose he had in mind in his discussion of the subject.

#### THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATION TO IDOLATRY

The people of the pagan world were in close contact with idolatry, and their lives were permeated with idolatrous customs. The Christian converts in Gentile communities had formerly participated in all these pagan practices, and in living the Christian life in these communities, they were brought face to face with the problem of idolatry. They were troubled about what their attitude should be towards these old customs. That was especially true of the Christians in Corinth, and in their letter to Paul, they seem to have made inquiry concerning the true attitude of Christians towards life that is touched by idolatry. The problem of idolatry, as it concerned them, related primarily to the meat of animals which had been offered in sacrifices. Was it right for Christians to buy the flesh of sacrificial animals which was being sold in the markets? Was it right for Christians to go into the homes of their pagan neighbors and eat with them and partake of the meat which was being served, when there was the possibility that it might have been offered in sacrifice? The life of the community was built upon idolatry, and the feasts held in the pagan temples were important functions. In their pre-Christian days they had participated in these feasts, and they wanted to know if it would be right for them to continue to have a part in them.

#### *Statement of Paul's Teaching*

Paul in his teaching on the subject of idolatry, was guided by the practical situation, but his statements were very explicit. He said there is no objection to a Christian eating any meat which is sold in the market, and when one goes to the market in a pagan community, he should purchase what he wants and not ask any questions for "conscience' sake" (I Cor. 10:25). Paul believed it was proper for Chris-

tians to eat any sort of meat, inasmuch as it all belongs to the Lord (I Cor. 10:26): "For the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." He felt that there could be no objection to a Christian eating meat, even if it had been offered in sacrifice, as there is no difference between this meat and any other meat, for an idol is nothing, as "there is no God but one" (I Cor. 8:4). If a Christian does not know that the meat was from an animal which had been offered in sacrifice to an idol, it cannot hurt him, since the meat is the same as any other; and that being true, he should not ask any questions about it. Paul said there could be no objection to a Christian attending a feast in an unbeliever's home, if he was disposed to do so; and when he did attend such a feast, unless he knew the meat had been offered in sacrifice, he should eat what was set before him, asking no questions for conscience' sake (I Cor. 10:27-29). He should not ask any question, for if it was stated in reply, that the meat was from a sacrificial animal, he might seem to be sanctioning idolatry if he ate; and at the same time a question would be raised in his own mind, and by eating he would be violating his own conscience. But if some one should state that the meat was from a sacrificial animal, a Christian should not eat it; he should refrain for the sake of the one who had made it known (I Cor. 10:28, 29). Paul even went so far as to intimate that a strong Christian might without injury to himself eat the meat, even if he knew it was from a sacrificial animal, since an idol is nothing; but inasmuch as all men have not this knowledge, the strong Christian must not permit his liberty to become a "stumbling-block to the weak" (I Cor. 8:4-13). Many of the members of the Christian community at Corinth, having but recently come out from paganism, looked upon the meats which had any connection with the pagan sacrifices as being closely connected with the idols which they had formerly worshipped. They would not think of eating this meat, and they would be offended to see a Christian brother eat. Paul advised the strong Christians to refrain for the sake of the weaker ones. His principle was that eating does not make a man either better or worse, and one is to do as he likes unless his eating injures his own conscience, or shocks the feelings of a weaker brother. When eating injures self or a weaker brother one must refrain, for he cannot afford to do anything which will injure his own soul, or cause his brother to stumble.

There was another phase of the question of the Christian's relation to idolatry which was even more vital to Paul. He was not concerned about the mere eating of meat which had been offered in sacrifice to

idols, unless the one who ate did violence to his own conscience, or injured a weaker brother; but he was concerned about the participation in idol worship. He objected to a Christian having anything to do with idolatry (I Cor. 10:7, 14). He objected to his participating in a feast in a heathen temple for two reasons. In the first place, if a Christian who was strong enough to resist the influence of idolatry should participate in a feast in a heathen temple, a weaker brother might through his example be led back into the old life. He objected in the second place, because the one who participates in a feast in an idol temple enters into fellowship with the demons. Paul held that an idol is nothing, hence meat which had been offered to idols is just ordinary meat, and a person would not be injured by eating unless he participated in the sacrifice. But he believed there were demons back of these idols, and the sacrifices in the temples were in reality sacrifices to the demons; hence Christians, by participating in a feast in an idol temple, would have fellowship with the demons (I Cor. 10:20).

*Sources from which Paul Derived his Conception of Idolatry*

a. His Jewish training.

The Jews after the time of the captivity were hostile to idolatry, and for two or three centuries before the time of Paul they were bitterly antagonistic to it. The making of these idols was satirized by the Jewish writers, and idolatry was opposed by the masses of the people. An attempt to force idolatry upon the nation led to the Maccabean revolt. The persecutions and the heroic struggles which followed this uprising created a feeling of antagonism to idolatry which the Palestinian Jews could never forget. Their feeling against idolatry was so bitter that they opposed Pilate when he brought the military ensigns from Caesarea to Jerusalem (See Ant. XVIII:3. 1).

The Jews believed an idol was nothing. The manufacture of idols was satirically described by many Old Testament writers, and the satire was even more pronounced in some of the later Jewish writings. The Jews believed their God alone had real existence. The one article of their creed was: "Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Mk. 12:29). While the Jews believed there was but one God, the tendency to regard the gods of the pagans as demons became pronounced during the Greek period. In the Apocalypse of Baruch the heathen gods are called *δαιμόνια*, and in the Sibylline books and in the book of Enoch the heathen deities are regarded as evil spirits.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> For a brief discussion of this subject see Article "demon," H. D. B., Vol. I, p. 592.

In warning the Corinthians against idolatry, Paul used the Israelites as an illustration (I Cor. 10:7). The passage which he quoted was taken from Ex. 32:6, and it describes the worship of the molten calf made by Aaron. He warned the Corinthians not to be idolaters as were some of the Israelites, who "sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." In connection with this warning, Paul mentioned a number of experiences of the Israelites which he connected with their idolatry; he regarded them as punishments which came upon them in consequence of their wrong-doing, and he said these "happened by way of example and were written for our admonition" (I Cor. 10:11). Paul felt that these experiences of the Israelites had a significance that was more far-reaching than mere punishment for their own wrong-doings; they were happening as examples for others. These things were written not merely to give a record of the experiences of the Israelites; they were written for the admonition of the Christians "upon whom the ends of the ages are come."

Paul's Jewish training and his knowledge of the Scriptures played an important part in the development of his thought about the relation of the Gentile Christians to idol worship. It gave him a feeling of contempt for the idols themselves, but a feeling of fear of the demons who were connected with idol worship. It also convinced him that God punished his children when they forsook him for idolatry.

b. The thought of the Greek world.

It was commonly believed in the Mediterranean world, that when a feast was held in a pagan temple, the god to whom the temple was dedicated was present as the host, and those who participated in the feast entered into fellowship with the deity in whose honor the feast was held. Paul must have been familiar with these ideas, and his contact with the Greeks had perhaps made him feel that there was some reality back of this pagan worship. His Jewish training would convince him that this reality was not deity, and the explanation which found expression in many Jewish writings that these heathen gods were demons, would appeal to him. Inasmuch as Paul believed the demons were connected with idol worship, he urged the Gentile Christians not to have any participation in idolatry, for he did not want them to have fellowship with demons.

c. Christian experience.

Experience was an important element in the development of Paul's theory of the relation of the Gentile Christians to idolatry. His Jewish

training and his contact with the life and thought of the Greeks helped to determine what idolatry meant to him; but his own personal experience and the purpose he sought to accomplish determined his instruction concerning the attitude of the Gentiles towards idolatrous customs. Some have thought Paul expressed two conflicting opinions about eating meat which had been offered to idols, and that these two opinions were expressed in the same letter, and in the same chapter. In the first first part of the chapter, he seems to advise against the eating of things sacrificed to idols on the ground that the Gentiles, in sacrificing to idols, in reality sacrifice to demons, and Christians, by eating these things, would necessarily have fellowship with demons. In the last part of the chapter, he said idols are nothing, and consequently the meat is not injured by having been offered in sacrifice; hence it is proper for a Christian to eat of it, if his conscience is not thus offended, or if he does not by his eating cause a weaker brother to stumble. Paul made a distinction between participating in idol worship and eating things which had been sacrificed to idols, and this distinction which he made, and the purpose which he had in mind in his letter, explain the apparent discrepancy. He had two purposes in mind, and in his effort to accomplish these, he seemed to contradict himself. He was anxious that the Christians should not needlessly offend their Gentile neighbors by their narrowness. He wanted them to have influence over their friends, and he knew that they would have more influence, if they enjoyed as far as possible their society. He knew the influence of the Christians would be very much hampered, if they broke entirely with the community; hence he told them to buy the meat sold in the shambles, and eat the meat served in Gentile homes whither they had gone as guests, providing attention had not been called to the fact that it had been offered to idols, and it was thus made a matter of conscience. Paul knew that it would be difficult for Christians to live in a heathen city, if they were to hold aloof from everything which had any connection with idolatry, and he laid down a broad principle to guide them in their various relationships. On the other hand, Paul was anxious that the Christians should keep their worship pure and have nothing to do with the heathenism from which they had broken away. He realized that if these Christians participated in the pagan worship at all, they would be in danger of drifting back into idolatry. He believed Satan was trying to defeat the work of God, and that the demons were putting forth idol worship as a means of keeping men away from the true God. To have anything to do with idol worship was to enter into fellowship

with the demons, and one who would do that could not have fellowship with God.

Paul had doubtless eaten meat which had been offered in sacrifice to idols, and had not been injured by it. He had seen others eat of this meat, and some of them, because their consciences were weak, were injured, while others who had no questionings in their minds were unaffected. Paul had seen Gentile Christians go to the heathen temples, and as a result, they lost interest in Christianity and drifted back into paganism. His conclusion was the result of experience, and he had no doubt about the wisdom of his advice.

Not only was Paul guided by experience in advising the Corinthians, but he taught that they were to be guided by experience in carrying out his instructions. A man was to be directed by his conscience in determining his attitude towards eating meat when it concerned himself alone. He should not do anything that would violate his own conscience but as long as he did not know the meat had been offered to idols, and there was no offense to conscience, there could be no harm in eating. Love was the principle which was to guide one in his relation to others. The Christian should follow the dictates of love, and do the things which contribute to the upbuilding of his fellows. He should be more concerned about the spiritual welfare of his brethren than he is about his own rights. This rule applied in both directions. On the one hand, the weak were not to judge the strong uncharitably and think they were sinful because they ate; and on the other hand, the strong were to forbear for the sake of the weak. The community should respect the individual's rights and grant him liberty of conscience, but the law of love should lead him to be ready to give up his liberty for the sake of the weaker brother.

Paul's advice on the question of eating meats seems on first thought to be contrary to his attitude on circumcision, but his position on both questions is in reality the same. He refused to have Titus circumcised to satisfy the prejudices of certain Jews, but a principle was involved, for he was insisting on the rights of the Gentiles. No principle, however, was involved in the question of eating meats offered to idols, and Paul's position was the opposite of the one he had taken on circumcision. He insisted that if eating would offend, then it was the duty of the Christian to refrain. He told the Corinthians to so live that they might make their lives as helpful as possible. He told them not to permit themselves to be a stumbling-block to the Jews by doing things which would give offense to them; nor to put a stumbling-block in the

way of Greeks by insisting on narrow scruples where no vital principle is involved; nor to put a stumbling-block in the way of the church of God by seeking personal interest; on the contrary they were to seek the profit of the many (I Cor. 10:32, 33). The purpose which Paul had before him, the winning of the world for Christ and the binding together of Jews and Gentiles, was a strong factor in determining his advice on the questions raised by idolatry. He wanted the Gentile Christians to do the things which would help him most in carrying out his purpose.

### SUMMARY

Paul's Jewish training played an important part in helping him to his solution of the problems raised by the establishment of Christianity in the Gentile world. It influenced him both negatively and positively in reaching his conclusion about the relation of the law to the gospel. His zeal for the law and its failure to bring peace prepared him for the time when he would forsake it as a means of justification, while his admiration for the law made him confident that it must have had a very definite place in the working out of God's plan. Paul's Jewish training was an important factor in determining his answer to the question about the Gentile Christian's relation to idolatry. It made him abhor idol worship and feel that it is impossible for one to have any connection with it and at the same time have fellowship with God; but it made him look upon the idols themselves with contempt, because he knew that there is only one God.

Paul was influenced in his solution of these problems by his contact with the life and thought of the Greeks. His observation of their religions helped to prepare him so that he would be willing to accept something besides law as the means of justification, and it also convinced him that the rites and ceremonies of the Jews would make no appeal to the Gentiles. His Greek environment helped to determine his attitude towards idol worship. His observation of these pagan religions had convinced him that the worshippers did enter into fellowship with supernatural powers, but he knew they were demons and not deities; hence he insisted that Christians should have no connection with heathen worship.

Paul must have been influenced in reaching his conclusion about the relation of the law to the gospel by the life and thought of the church into which he entered. The realization that these Christians had

something that law could not give prepared him for the conviction that law is not essential to salvation.

The most important factors in determining Paul's solution of the problems raised by the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles were his own personal experience and the purpose which he sought to accomplish. His own personal experience and his observation of others had convinced him that the law cannot justify, and that faith in Christ not only makes one acceptable to God, but it also gives him victory. Paul's contact with the Greeks had convinced him that they would never accept the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law, and he realized that if he was to carry out his purpose of winning the Gentile world for Christ, it would be necessary to free them from the obligation of keeping the law. His desire to accomplish the great purpose to which he had dedicated his life led him to assume a liberal attitude towards pagan customs. He became all things to all men in order that he might win them.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUBJECTS CONNECTED WITH THE CHURCH

Paul sought to plant new churches in all the important centers of the Mediterranean world, and by means of these churches, he hoped to evangelize the surrounding territory. When he was with these churches in person, he must have given very definite instructions concerning their regulation and activities; but after he had left them, new situations developed, and he felt the need of giving additional instruction through his letters. A study of Paul's teaching, in his letters, on these various subjects will throw much light on his conception of authority.

#### WHAT THE CHURCH IS

##### *Statement of Paul's Teaching*

Paul sometimes used the term "kingdom of God," but he used the term "church" more frequently. By the term "church" he designated the believers in some definite locality, as Thessalonica (I Thess. 1:1), or Corinth (I Cor. 1:1, 2). Very little is said about the organization of these Christian communities. In his greeting to the Philippians, he mentioned especially the bishops and deacons (Phil. 1:1). This would seem to indicate that there were in the church at Philippi two groups of officers which bore the designation "bishops" and "deacons." No mention is made of these officers in other churches, but that does not prove that these other churches did not have them. The fact, however, that Paul wrote directly to the churches, and called upon them to act, would indicate that he regarded these officers, if the churches did have them, as being merely their servants. Paul did not outline any scheme of organization for the local churches. The organization was simple, for the Spirit would see to it that things were done in order. Paul was not building up a great organization for the future, for he believed the parousia was near.

Paul referred to all the Christian communities in a given province by the term "churches"; as for example, "the churches of Asia" (I Cor. 16:19), the churches of Macedonia" (II Cor. 8:1), "the churches of Galatia" (Gal. 1:2), "the churches of Judea" (Gal. 1:22). He sometimes used the term "church" in the singular to designate the whole body of believers. His persecution of individual Christians was interpreted as a persecution waged against the church (Gal. 1:13). He re-

garded the believers in Christ as constituting a body in which Christ's spirit has its abode. The members of this body are bound together in a single organism; hence the welfare of one is the welfare of all (I Cor. 12:12 ff.). He regarded the church as a unit, bound together by Christ, and animated by his spirit. Paul applied the term "church" to any body of believers that met together in Christ's name for worship, and he thought of all those believers collectively as constituting Christ's church. There is no reference in Paul's writings to an organization which was intended to unify and regulate all these separate communities. He believed they were unified and controlled by the spirit of Christ. Paul thought of the church as the body of Christ, and he believed his spirit dwells within it as a man's spirit dwells in his body. The local church had certain office-bearers who were selected by the church to perform definite duties, but Paul believed that in addition to these, there were in the church certain men whom God had appointed for peculiar service. These men had special gifts which qualified them for definite service. Paul believed these gifts had been divinely bestowed; hence the men who possessed them were divinely appointed (I Cor. 12:28).

Paul did not feel that there were two churches, the one Jewish, and the other Gentile; he regarded them all as constituting the one body. The churches of Judea were in Christ just as much as were the churches of the Gentiles (Gal. 1:22; I Thess. 2:14). He called them churches of God (Gal. 1:13; I Cor. 15:9), and spoke of the first Christians as "brethren" (I Cor. 15:6), and "saints" (I Cor. 16:1; Rom. 15:25). He held up the churches of Judea before the Thessalonians as models for them to imitate (I Thess. 2:14, 15).

#### *Sources from which Paul Derived his Conception of the Church*

##### a. His Jewish inheritance.

Paul was familiar with the idea of the church before he came in contact with the Christian movement. The Jews had their religious community, and in the LXX, this was designated as  $\eta\ \acute{\epsilon}\kappa\kappa\lambda\eta\sigma\iota\alpha$ . These communities meant much to the non-Palestinian Jews, and throughout the Mediterranean world they were much like the Christian churches of the earlier period. In fact, they were so much alike that the Romans did not at first distinguish between them. The Jewish communities were composed of those who were called out from the rest of the world by their faith in Jehovah, and they were bound together by this common faith and by their peculiar rites and ceremonies. They had their syn-

agogues which became the centers of Jewish communities, and while the individual Jew belonged to some particular community, yet, inasmuch as they were all alike, he felt at home in any of them. The members of the community who belonged to the same synagogue were called "sons of the synagogue."<sup>1</sup> Inasmuch as the Jew could feel at home in any of these synagogues and could enter into their worship, he must have felt that he and the rest of the Jews belonged to a great body which had been called out from the rest of the world, and that they were one in their faith, their fellowship, and their tasks. Paul inherited these ideas, and he must have been influenced by them in the development of his idea of the church.

The local synagogues had their organization, and Paul became familiar with that by the training of his early years. The most important officials were the elders of the synagogue, and in the non-Palestinian communities, these officers were distinct from the civil officials. In addition to these, each synagogue had a ruler of the synagogue (*ἀρχιστυγιώτης*), the receiver of alms, and the minister (*ὑπηρέτης*).<sup>2</sup> This organization would be so impressed upon Paul that he would necessarily be influenced by it in the organization which he suggested for the churches which he established. The local synagogues were largely independent in their management, but they were united in fellowship; and it is significant that the churches under Paul's leadership developed along these lines.

#### b. The life and thought of the Mediterranean world.

Associations and guilds of various kinds were found in all parts of the Mediterranean world of Paul's day. Some of these were for business and for fellowship, and some of them were for purely religious purposes. Paul must have been acquainted with these, and some writers think they furnished the model for the organization of the Pauline churches.<sup>3</sup> The organization of these religious associations must have been similar to that adopted by the churches which were established by Paul, for the terms *ἐπίσκοποι* and *διάκονοι* are frequently found in inscriptions, and the connection plainly indicates that they had a technical reference to religious officials. These pagan societies were designated as "corpora," and there may have been some connection between that designation and Paul's reference to the church as a body.

<sup>1</sup> See Article "Synagogue," H. D. B., Vol. IV, p. 638.

<sup>2</sup> For a fuller discussion of the synagogue see Emil Schürer, *A History of the Jewish People*, Divis. II, Vol. II, pp. 44 ff.

<sup>3</sup> See C. F. George Heinrici, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther*, 1880, pp. 5 ff.

The one who had not been initiated into the mysteries of the pagan cults was designated as an *ἰδιώτης*, and Paul seems to have used that term in somewhat the same sense in I Cor. 14:16

Paul must have been acquainted with these religious guilds and with their organization, and it is very probable that he was influenced by them. Inasmuch as the churches which he established were largely composed of Gentiles, it would be natural for him to adapt these churches to Gentile ways of thinking. The ideas concerning the church which he inherited from his Jewish training were undoubtedly modified by his Greek environment.

c. The life and thought of the church into which he entered.

It is impossible to state just what was the conception of the church when Paul became a Christian, or what its organization was; but from the very first there was a body of people who were bound together by their belief in Jesus, and very soon the theory of their significance and of their program began to develop. Paul must have been influenced by this body of believers, as it was when he became a part of the Christian movement. There must have been some development in the Palestinian Church before Paul began his aggressive campaigns. As time passed the church became more distinct from Judaism, and the Christians had a more definite appreciation of their identity as a separate institution. There must have been some development in the organization of these communities, and they would naturally develop along Jewish lines. They must have had a more definite idea of the significance of the Christian group and of the work they were to do. Paul kept in close touch with the Jewish section of the church after he began his missionary activities, and it must have influenced his idea of the church which he was seeking to establish throughout the Mediterranean world.

d. His own personal experience.

Paul's own personal experience and the purpose which he had before him were important factors in the development of his thought of the church. Paul's aim was to keep the church united. He not only desired to have the local communities bound together in close fellowship, but he was anxious to have that fellowship unite all communities. There were influences that were dividing local churches, like the one at Corinth, and the whole church was in danger of being rent over the question of circumcision. These conditions influenced Paul and led him to emphasize the unity of the church. His own Christian experience guided him in the development of his idea of the church which was the

basis of his discussion of its unity. Paul believed he was united to Christ in such a vital manner that Christ was living in him, and he believed all other Christians should be united to Christ in the same way. If all were thus united to Christ, they would be united to each other, and they would then constitute a great body in which Christ should dwell.

Experience was doubtless a prominent factor in determining the organization of the Pauline churches. It is not probable that the organization was static in all the Pauline churches during all the period of his missionary career, and it is very doubtful whether it was uniform in all the churches at any given time. It was a development, and the particular need was one of the determining influences in this development. Paul was influenced by his Jewish training, and by the life and thought of the Mediterranean world, but his experience was the factor which determined his method of procedure. He used that method of procedure which worked best, and the organization of the churches which were under his leadership was a development to meet growing needs. The church was a temple in which the spirit of Christ dwelt, and they trusted the divine spirit to guide them into all truth.

#### THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

The two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are discussed in the Pauline writings, and yet one is surprised in reading these letters to find how little teaching there is on these subjects. Undoubtedly much teaching was given when he was with these churches in person, and what we have in his letters was for the purpose of illustration, or to correct abuses.

##### *Baptism*

###### a. What it meant for Paul.

Paul had little to say about baptism, but his few statements are very significant. Inasmuch as he did not give any direct teaching on the subject of baptism, his position must be inferred from his incidental references. It is evident from the statements which he made that all the members of the Pauline churches had been baptized. In his criticism of those in Corinth who were calling themselves after Cephas, or Apollos, or himself, he asked if they had been baptized into the name of Paul (I Cor. 1:13), and this would indicate that they had been baptized into some other name. In emphasizing the unity of the church, he likened it to the human body, and the individual Christians were regarded as constituting the members of this body (I Cor. 12:12 ff.).

Paul said these different members were all baptized in one spirit into one body (I Cor. 12:13). It is very evident that this refers to the ordinance of Christian baptism.<sup>4</sup> Paul affirmed that the Galatians, when they started in the Christian life, obligated themselves to Christ rather than to the law, and he referred to their baptism as an indication of that fact (Gal. 3:27). His statement would imply that they had all been baptized, and that they had been baptized into the name of Christ: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ." Paul urged the Roman Christians not to continue in sin, inasmuch as they had died to sin, and he pointed to their baptism as an indication of that death (Rom. 6:3, 4). This passage would seem to infer that all who were regarded as Christians had been baptized, and that the baptism which had been administered to them was in the nature of a burial and resurrection. It seems evident that all the members of the Christian groups in Rome, Corinth, and Galatia had been baptized, and it is very probable that the same condition prevailed in all the other Pauline churches.

It is more difficult to determine the significance of baptism for Paul, than it is to determine its existence in the churches founded by him. There are few subjects in Pauline thought concerning which scholars have differed more widely than the one relating to the significance of baptism. Paul did not regard baptism as the fundamental thing in his work. His great task was the preaching of the gospel, and the administering of baptism was a mere incident in his mission. He scarcely remembered the names of the ones whom he had baptized in Corinth, and he apparently was not much concerned whether he or others had baptized the Corinthians, for Christ had sent him to preach the gospel, and not to baptize. It would be misleading, however, to say Paul was not concerned about baptism, for he believed it was of vital importance. He believed it had a significance for the community, for it was the common rite which bound the members into one body (I Cor. 12:13). The Jew and the Greek, the bond and the free, were all baptized into one body. Barriers which had hitherto been insurmountable were broken down, and through the rite of baptism they were bound together, and were all made to drink of one spirit.

The phase of baptism that was most important in Paul's thinking was its significance for the individual. He believed the individual was baptized into Christ Jesus, and through this ordinance he was

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of this point see Int. Crit. Com.

brought into his death. Many writers have interpreted Paul's conception of baptism as being merely symbolic. They maintain that he regarded baptism as symbolizing the union with Christ which is accomplished through faith.<sup>5</sup> These writers hold that baptism had a moral import for Paul, because he believed it represented in a figurative manner that the one who was being baptized had died, and he was thus being buried and resurrected with Christ. They hold that baptism symbolised for Paul a moral transformation; the one who was being baptized had already died to sin and had been raised to holiness, and thus it represented in an outward form that which had already taken place in the life.<sup>6</sup> The symbolic significance of baptism was prominent in Paul's thinking. It did undoubtedly symbolize the believer's death to sin and resurrection to the new life. It committed the individual to Christ, as the passage through the Red Sea committed the Israelites to the leadership of Moses (I Cor. 10:2.).

A disinterested interpretation of Paul's writings, however, must give baptism a more essential place than that of a mere symbolism. While it had symbolic significance, it had intrinsic value within itself. According to Gal. 3:27, it is in the act of baptism that individuals are brought into Christ (*εἰς χριστόν*), and those who are baptized into Christ put on Christ (*χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε*). According to Romans (6:3, 4), it is through baptism, that individuals are brought into the death of Christ (*εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν*), and as a result of having been buried with Christ through baptism into his death, they shall walk in newness of life. In one of the Corinthian letters (I Cor. 12:13), Paul evidently connected the reception of the Spirit with baptism. Baptism not only brought together the discordant elements into one body, but in this rite they were all made to drink of one Spirit (*πάντες ἐν πνεύμα ἐποιούσθημεν*).<sup>7</sup> In this same letter (I Cor. 15:29) Paul referred to their

<sup>5</sup> George B. Stevens (*The Theology of the New Testament*, 1910, pp. 461 f.) holds that baptism was important to Paul because of its spiritual significance. He said: "It is not baptism considered as an outward rite, but baptism considered in its inner import, which portrays this grafting into Christ."

<sup>6</sup> H. A. A. Kennedy (*St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, 1913, p. 251) says it is absurd to think Paul associated the reception of the Spirit with baptism, for if he had done so, he would have placed more stress upon it. He thinks baptism had a double significance for Paul. On the one hand, it was the completion of the process of entering into Christ; and on the other hand, it was "the real recognition and assurance of the new life, which are quickened in the soul by the baptismal experience."

<sup>7</sup> H. A. A. Kennedy (*St. Paul and the Mystery Religions*, 1913, p. 239) who places the emphasis on the symbolic significance of baptism, admits that this passage connects the reception of the Spirit with baptism.

custom of baptizing for the dead. Many interpretations of this passage have been given, but it seems almost certain that it refers to a custom, which must have been practiced at Corinth, and which may have been practiced elsewhere to some extent, of receiving baptism in behalf of departed friends in hope that they would thus share in the resurrection of Christ.<sup>8</sup> Paul did not give his sanction to this custom, but inasmuch as he sought to correct the errors of the Corinthian Church, the fact that he referred to it and did not condemn it would seem to indicate that he did not disapprove of it. Taking all these things into consideration, it seems almost certain that Paul regarded baptism, not only as a symbol, but as having real value in itself. He regarded it as a means by which Christ is imparted to men and through which they are made partakers of the divine benefits.

b. Sources from which Paul derived his conception of baptism.

(a) His Jewish training.

The Jews had numerous washings which were associated with the idea of cleansing. The priests were required to wash in the laver before they ministered in the temple. The Pharisees practiced a ceremonial washing before they ate, and this was referred to as a baptism. The Pharisee who had invited Jesus to dine with him "marveled that he had not first bathed himself before dinner" (Lk 11:38) and the term used is the same as the one which is elsewhere translated "baptize" (*καθαρίσθη*). The Pharisees had the custom of the "baptizings of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels" (Mk 7:4) It seems quite probable that the Jews performed a baptismal rite for the purpose of initiating a proselyte into the Jewish community. Paul was familiar with all these ceremonies, and he was influenced by them in the formation of his conception of Christian baptism

(b) The thought of the Mediterranean world.

Paul's notion of ceremonialism in religion must be studied in connection with the thought of the world in which he lived and labored. The mystery-cults differed in many particulars, but they agreed in offering present and future happiness to those who were initiated into fellowship with the deity, and a sacred bath constituted a part of this initiation. While there is no indication that the name of the deity was pronounced when this lustration was performed, yet the very character of the rite implied a confession of the deity on the part of the one initiated.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Int. Crit. Com.

<sup>9</sup> Paul Schweitzer (*Geschichte der Paulinischen Forschung*, 1911, pp. 162 f.; Eng. trans. 1912, p. 208), who does not believe Greek thought influenced Paul in his idea

It is impossible to state with absolute certainty the teaching of the mystery-religions about the sacred bath, but most of those who have made a special study of these cults agree on several important points. They agree that many of them had a sacred lustration, either of water or of blood, and that it was a part of the initiation ceremony. They agree that the purpose of this bath was to bring the initiate into fellowship with the god, who had died and had been raised from the dead, in order that he might be made the possessor of immortality. They agree that this initiation brought the individual into such close touch with the deity that the deity entered into him and took possession of him. They are also agreed that these mystery-cults were quite widely disseminated throughout the Mediterranean world before the time of Paul. Undoubtedly many who became Christians under the labors of Paul had passed through these initiatory rites, and they necessarily carried some of their old ideas over into their Christian experience. It is natural that Paul should have used a terminology which would be familiar to the Gentile Christians, but he was undoubtedly influenced in his conception of the significance of the rite, as well as in his terminology. When the lustrations of the mystery-religions are compared with Paul's idea of baptism, many striking differences are noted, but the main purpose is the same in either case. Just as the initiate into the mystery-cult was brought into fellowship with the deity through the divine bath, so the individual through Christian baptism is brought into fellowship with Christ.

There has been much discussion about the relation of Paul's statement about baptizing for the dead (I Cor. 15:29) to the mystery-religions. A papyrus attests a baptism of the dead. The dead man is represented as being between two gods, and they administer to him, rather than to a substitute, the sacred bath.<sup>10</sup> Some writers believe the mystery-religions furnish examples of the substitution of one person for another in the sacred ablution, and that the condition in Corinth to which Paul referred was derived from these pagan cults.<sup>11</sup>

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of baptism, admits that the mystery-cults had a baptismal rite, and that this rite implied confession of the deity on the part of the one who was being initiated.

<sup>10</sup> See R. Reitzenstein, *Die hellenistischen Mysterienreligionen*, 1910, p. 84.

<sup>11</sup> Percy Gardner (*The Religious Experience of St. Paul*, 1911, p. 110) says: "It appears also that in the Tauropolis substitution of one person for another was allowed, one man receiving the benefit of the bath of another."

It seems almost certain that the Greek world contributed important elements to Paul's doctrine of Christian baptism, but the practice of these mystery-cults would not be sufficient of themselves to explain his conception. They contributed their part along with other influences.

(c) The thought of the primitive church.

We do not know just what notion of baptism Paul received from the primitive church. The rite was undoubtedly administered by the church from the very beginning, and Paul must have been baptized according to the regulation of the church, but it is impossible to state just what it meant to him when he was baptized. The Book of Acts gives but a brief account of the life and thought of the early church, and as it was written many years after the beginning of the church, it is impossible to tell just how much this account was modified by later thought. According to the account in the first part of Acts, baptism was more than a formal act; it had a vital connection with the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38). But the significance of baptism, as it is indicated in the first part of Acts, is very different from what it was for Paul.

(d) His own personal experience.

Although Paul received the rite of baptism from the primitive church, and his Jewish training had prepared him for its reception, and his Greek environment had given him ideas which would lead him to put a new meaning into it, yet his own personal experience was an important factor in the development of the significance of this Christian ordinance. Paul transformed the primitive conception of baptism into the mystical idea of dying with Christ and arising to a new life with him, and while Greek thought suggested it to him, his doctrine was worked out in his own experience. His argument in Galatians and Romans was to the effect that a man is justified and enters into fellowship with God through faith in Christ, and his teaching on baptism must be understood in the light of his discussion of faith.

It might seem that Paul had two conceptions of salvation, the one being ethical and the result of faith, and the other being mystical and the result of sacraments, and that these two were antagonistic to each other. It is more probable, however, that these two conceptions had been blended in Paul's thinking, and the one phase was the result of his contact with the thought of the Greeks, and the other resulted from his own Christian experience. The one to whom baptism is administered has faith in Christ, and this faith, accompanied by the

mystic rite, brings him into fellowship with his Lord. Faith in a crucified and risen Christ was presupposed as the condition of receiving the initiatory rite. It was on account of his faith that the individual was permitted to receive the rite of baptism, and these together brought him into Christ, and made him a partaker of the divine Spirit. In the mystery-cults the emphasis was placed on the initiatory rite, but Paul placed the stress on faith, and his own experience would have made it impossible for him to have done otherwise.

Paul made one reference to baptism in connection with Old Testament history. In his letter to the Corinthians he was arguing that the people who had been baptized and had evidence of God's approval might, because of disobedience and rebellion, be rejected by him; and he referred to the experience of Israel as an illustration of that fact. Although they "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (I Cor. 10:2), yet "they were overthrown in the wilderness" (I Cor. 10:5). His use of baptism in this connection would indicate that he received his ideas from other sources, and then read them back into the Old Testament. He drew a comparison between baptism into Christ and into Moses. While it is not expressed in his illustration, yet it is implied that as the Christians were united to Christ by baptism, and thus obtained salvation, so the Israelites obtained salvation from Egypt by being united to Moses by a baptism in the cloud and in the sea. Paul received the rite of baptism from the primitive church, but its significance for him was derived from the Greek religions and from his own personal experience, and he then read these conceptions back into the Old Testament, and used it to make his doctrine effective.

### *The Lord's Supper*

#### a. What it meant for Paul.

Paul had very little to say in his writings about the Lord's Supper, but what he did say is important. There are some incidental references which are significant, but the fullest discussion is in I Cor. 11:17-34. Paul had evidently given the Corinthians definite instructions concerning the significance of the Lord's Supper, and the manner in which they should observe it, when he was with them, but they had failed to live up to his instructions. They did not come together in the right spirit, for there were divisions among them. The Lord's Supper was intended to be a fellowship-meal, but the Corinthians, because of the manner in which they were celebrating it, had made it anything but that. They did not wait for one another in their partaking, but

some ate and drank to excess before the others had had a chance, and the result was that some were hungry and others were drunken. Paul declared that when they partook in this selfish spirit it was not possible for them to discern the Lord's body, and because they had eaten without discerning the Lord's body, many of them were weak and sickly, and not a few of them had died. We do not know the circumstances to which Paul referred, but it is very probable that some malady had swept over the church, and he attributed this to their laxity in regard to the sacred meal. He may have believed there was some magical influence in the Lord's Supper, and as a consequence those who partook of it unworthily suffered physical ills, or he may have regarded this sickness and death in the church as a divine punishment, inflicted on them because of their lack of reverence for divine things, as the Israelites were punished because of their disregard for God's laws (See I Cor. 10:10-13). According to I Cor. 11:17-34, the main purpose for their coming together should have been to celebrate the Lord's Supper, and the object of this celebration was not merely to remember Christ; it was to proclaim his death "till he come." This celebration had a significance for the individual which was of more vital concern than either of these, for it was a partaking of the Lord's body. Those who celebrated the Lord's Supper were not to partake of the bread to satisfy their hunger, for if they were hungry, they were to eat at home. When they partook of the sacred meal, they were to discriminate between that bread and other bread, for that was the Lord's body.

In I Cor. 10:14-22, Paul used the Lord's Supper as an illustration, and the use which he made of it would indicate that he regarded it as being more than a mere memorial institution. He was arguing against participation in sacrifice to idols on the ground that this would bring them into communion with demons, and he used the Lord's Supper to prove his argument. He said the cup is a communion of the blood of Christ, and the bread is a communion of the body of Christ. The word translated "communion" is *κοινωνία*, and this means fellowship, participation, or intercourse. Paul believed that one has fellowship with the sufferings of Christ when he partakes of the bread and wine. He regarded the Lord's Supper as being something more than a memorial of Christ, or a proclamation of his death; it was a fellowship of the body and blood of the Lord, and to partake without discerning the Lord's body would bring condemnation.

b. Sources from which Paul derived his conception of the Lord's Supper.

## (a) His Jewish training.

There were some Jewish customs which helped to prepare Paul for an appreciation of the sacred meal of the Christians. Among the Jews, eating and drinking together was a means of producing fellowship. When one came to the table of his host, he not only had his protection, but he also had his friendship, and because of the common meal, they had fellowship with each other. The Jews had the custom of partaking of their sacrifices, and while this was quite different from the sacred meal of the Christians, it undoubtedly contributed something to Paul's understanding of the Christian institution. The Jew's celebration of the Passover, which commemorated their deliverance from bondage, helped to prepare Paul for the celebration of the Christian feast, which commemorated a more important deliverance. These customs influenced Paul only indirectly, and when he used the Old Testament to illustrate the Lord's Supper, it was other incidents to which he referred; but the custom of eating together not only emphasized the idea of fellowship, but as in the case of the feasts, it had a deeper significance.

## (b) The thought of the Mediterranean world.

Recent investigations have thrown much light upon the ceremonialism of the world in which Paul lived, and this must be taken into account in any serious attempt to understand Paul's thinking. Attis worship, which had penetrated the Roman empire two centuries before the time of Paul, had the "agape" in which the candidates partook of food and drink. This was a part of the initiation into the mysteries of Attis, and by means of it, the initiates became partakers of the higher life. The password into the Eleusinian mysteries seems to have been: "I fasted, I drank the barley-drink, I took from the sacred chest; having tasted I placed them into the basket and again from the basket into the chest." This ritual seems to imply that the initiate, through eating and drinking, was brought into communion with the deity, and was thus made a partaker in the triumph over death.<sup>12</sup> In the Dionysus cult, it was believed that one could participate in the life of the god by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the victim in which the god was supposed to be incarnate. Many of the mystery-religions had a sacred meal. This meal was sometimes held in the temple of the god, and it was believed that the god was present as host, and that those who ate had fellowship with him. An invitation to one of those feasts is contained in Pap. Oxyr., 1, 110: "Chairemon invites you to a dinner

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion of this point see "Shirley Jackson Case," *The Evolution of Early Christianity*, 1914, p. 294.

at the table of the Lord Serapis in the Serapaeum to-morrow, i.e., the 15th."

Some writers think that Paul was influenced very little, if at all, in his conception of the Lord's Supper by the sacred meals of the pagans. Others go to the opposite extreme and insist that Paul instituted the Lord's Supper, and that it was pagan influences that led him to do it. They hold that when Paul gave the Christians the sacred meal, he realized that he was giving them something new; hence he claimed a divine revelation for it. They maintain that the Lord's Supper was the outgrowth of a need. The pagans had their sacred meals, and the Christians, to make headway in this environment, had to have a substitute; hence the table of the Lord was instituted to compete with the table of demons.<sup>13</sup>

Paul was undoubtedly influenced, by the thought of the Greeks, in his conception of the Lord's Supper, but the theory which he presented was very different from that of the Greek mysteries. A careful comparison of Paul's doctrine of the Lord's Supper with the sacred meals of the mystery-cults reveals more differences than similarities. The Greek Mysteries contributed important elements to Paul's thought, but these elements were worked over under other influences, and the result was something very different from the pagan feasts.<sup>14</sup>

(c) The life and thought of the church into which he entered.

In the fullest discussion of the Lord's Supper which Paul gave he made the statement that he received of the Lord that which he delivered unto them. As pointed out above, some writers hold that Paul was making the claim that he did not receive his account of the instituting of the Lord's Supper from historical tradition, but that it came to him through a divine revelation; and they insist that a study of the whole subject plainly demonstrates the truthfulness of his claim. Some writers hold that Paul originated the feast, while others believe he changed the significance of it so that it was virtually a new institution.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion of this position see F. C. Conybeare, *Myth, Magic and Morals*, 1910, pp. 251 ff.

<sup>14</sup> Percy Gardner (*The Religious Experiences of St. Paul*, 1911, p. 113) holds that the feasts of communion with departed heroes and ancestors furnish the closest parallel to Paul's conception of communion that we have. He says: "The ancestor was invisibly present as was the Master among the Christians."

<sup>15</sup> O. Pfleiderer (*Das Urchristenthum*, I Band., p. 77) holds that Paul meant to affirm that the knowledge which he was imparting came directly from Christ, and he thinks Paul's sense of spiritual communion was so strong that the impulses which were given him by the Spirit were more authoritative for him than human traditions.

Those who believe Paul gave the Lord's Supper to the church find this a very convenient passage, but it is doubtful whether Paul meant to assert anything concerning the source from which he had received his knowledge of the institution. There does not seem to be any reason for assuming that he had received his information by supernatural means. The thing of importance was, not the method of communication, but the source from which the communication came, and in some manner Paul had received this from Christ.

Regardless of what one's theory concerning the special revelation may be, it can be assumed that the primitive church had a sacred meal of some sort, and that Paul received that as a part of the life of the church into which he entered. It is impossible to state just what the significance of the Lord's Supper was, as it was celebrated in the early church, but it was undoubtedly quite different from what it later became in Paul's thinking. But the institution, as it was celebrated by the church into which he entered, became the basis of his doctrine, and this was developed under other influences.

(d) His own personal experience.

Paul received from his Jewish training the notion that fellowship is associated with eating and drinking, and because of his Jewish inheritance, it was natural for him to connect a sacred meal with the commemoration of a great event. From his contact with the Greek world, he received the idea of the meal being a sacrament. Because of this Greek environment it was natural for him to regard the emblems as sacred, and as containing magical efficacy; and it was also natural for him to regard the meal as a means of bringing the individual into fellowship with Christ, in whose honor it was being celebrated. From the primitive Christians he received the meal as it was being celebrated by the church into which he entered, but he interpreted it in the light of his Jewish training, and his Greek environment, and his own Christian experience, and this last was fundamental for him.

Paul's doctrine of the Lord's Supper cannot be explained apart from his own Christian experience. He was not a sacramentarian in his

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Percy Gardner (*The Religious Experiences of St. Paul*, p. 111) thinks Paul regarded his own version of the Lord's Supper as a revelation from Christ. He thinks the primitive church before the time of Paul had the custom of breaking bread at a common meal, which was in some way connected with Jesus' last supper with his disciples, but that Paul's conception of the Lord's Supper was so different that he did not regard it as a rite which he had received from the original apostles, but he believed he had received it as a direct revelation from Christ.

interpretation of religion. He believed communion with Christ was dependent upon faith, and not upon any sacred rite, and hence these sacred rites would be of no avail apart from this living faith. Christ was living within Paul, because he had become united to his Master by faith, and he had undoubtedly experienced a strengthening of this faith and a quickening of the Spirit within by participating in the Lord's Supper. The feelings which he had inherited from his contact with the Greeks would make it natural for him to believe that Christ was present at the feast, and his own faith would bring him into fellowship with his unseen, but present Lord. This feast could not be for Paul a simple memorial of one who had died; it was a spiritual communion with One who is living and is coming again to be the judge of men. Paul's conception of the Lord's Supper was not Jewish, neither was it Greek, nor primitive Christian; it was peculiarly his own. These other influences had been amalgamated and modified under his own creative personality, and the result was a Pauline conception of the Lord's Supper.

Having formulated his doctrine of the eucharistic meal, Paul then read his thought back into the Old Testament. In using the Hebrews to illustrate the truth that God may reject those who once had his approval, if they forsake him and became disobedient, he made a comparison, not only between the baptism of the Christians and the Hebrews, but also between their sacred food and drink. He said the Israelites "did all eat the same spiritual food; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ" (I Cor. 10:3, 4). Paul made the manna and the rock correspond to the loaf and the cup in the Lord's Supper, and his argument implies that as eating of the manna and drinking of the rock did not save the Israelites, neither would the mere eating of the loaf and drinking of the cup save the Christians.

No Jew, unless he had approached it from the Christian point of view, would have thought of the manna and the rock as being like the emblems of the Lord's Supper. There is nothing in this experience of the Israelites that could have been a source for the development of Paul's doctrine. His doctrine was developed from other sources, and he then read it back into the Old Testament.

#### THE WORSHIP OF THE CHURCH

Paul did not give any definite instructions about the general order of worship in the church. He perhaps did not regard this as important,

and he left the churches to develop their own order of worship under the spontaneous promptings of the Spirit. Their worship was under the control of the Spirit, and each one took the part which the Spirit prompted him to take.

### *Spiritual Gifts*

Paul's fullest and most complete discussion of the gifts of the Spirit is in I Cor. chaps. XII-XIV, and this discussion seems to have been occasioned by disorders, which were the result of abuses of the gifts. This discussion presents a very interesting picture of the worship of the Christian community in Corinth, and perhaps this picture would fairly represent other Gentile communities as well. The Spirit bestowed on the members of this community different kinds of gifts, and these gifts found expression in their worship. One had the word of wisdom, another the word of knowledge, another faith, and another gifts of healings. Some had the gift of working miracles, others had the gift of prophecy, and others had the gift of discerning spirits. Some had the gift of divers kinds of tongues, and others had the gift of interpretation of tongues.

It seems that the expression of these gifts had caused disorder in the church. While one was prophesying, another, moved by a sudden impulse, would begin speaking, or another, seized by the Spirit, would utter unintelligible sounds. Perhaps two or three would give way to these ecstatic feelings at the same time. There must have been the wildest disorder in some of their meetings. There was so much confusion among the worshippers that a stranger coming in might think they were mad (I Cor. 14:23). It would seem that in some of these meetings there were those who, during these ecstatic spells, pronounced curses upon Jesus (I Cor. 12:3).

#### a. Statement of Paul's teaching.

Paul believed in the reality of these charismata. He believed it was the same Spirit that bestowed these diversities of gifts, and that the manifestation of these was an indication of the Spirit's presence and power. He even believed in the gift of speaking with tongues, and he thanked God that he spoke with tongues more than all the rest (I Cor. 14:18). Paul believed in these ecstatic experiences, and he gloried in his own visions and revelations. He referred to an experience when he, whether in the body or out of the body he could not say, was caught up into Paradise and heard unspeakable words.

Paul urged that these spirits should be tested, for there were evil spirits as well as good ones, and the manifestation of evil spirits should

not be permitted in the life of the church. The standard by which the spirit was to be tested was the attitude towards Christ of the individual through whom the spirit was working (I Cor. 12:3). The man who says, "Jesus is anathema," is possessed by an evil spirit rather than by the spirit of God, for no one can say "Jesus is anathema," if he is speaking under the influence of the divine Spirit. The one who says, "Jesus is Lord," has the true spirit, for no one can call Jesus Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

Paul urged that inasmuch as those who possessed these different gifts were parts of one body, they should be used for the building up of that body. He believed these gifts of the Spirit should be valued according to their helpfulness, and judged by this standard, the gift of prophecy was more valuable than the gift of speaking with tongues, because prophecy edified others and the gift of speaking with tongues was an ecstatic experience which helped only the speaker. The gift of speaking with tongues had no value for the community, unless there was some one present who was able to act as interpreter, and if there was no interpreter present, the use of this gift might even be injurious to the community (I Cor. 14:26). Having adopted the principle that everything should be done unto edifying, Paul insisted that not more than two or three at most should speak in a tongue, and that these must be in turn; and even this should not be permitted unless there was some one present who could interpret to the assembly what had been said. If no interpreter was present, the man who felt prompted to speak in a tongue should keep silent in the church and speak to himself and to God. Paul held that while speaking in a tongue might help the one who did the speaking, the law of love should control his actions; and hence he should be silent when his speaking would not edify. Only two or three of the prophets were to speak, and the rest were to discriminate between their messages. These prophets were to speak as they felt moved by the Spirit, and the people were to determine which one had the true message. He taught that if while one prophet was speaking, another felt that a revelation had been made to him, he could begin speaking and the other must sit down. Two men were not permitted to speak at once, and the fact that the Spirit was beginning to use another man was an indication that he was through with the one who had been speaking. The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets (I Cor. 14:32).

Paul believed love was the most excellent gift of the Spirit (I Cor. 12:31 ff.), and he said all other gifts must be subjected to that. These

other gifts would fail, but love would abide. He urged the Corinthians to pursue spiritual gifts, but to use them only as they would serve the law of love.

b. Sources from which Paul derived his conception of spiritual gifts.  
(a). His Jewish inheritance.

The Jewish religion of Paul's day was dominated by Scribism, and hence it was quite formal; but the religion of the prophets was more spiritual. The prophets of the Old Testament period believed they were under the control of the divine Spirit. Old Testament prophecy at its best was unlike the New Testament phenomenon of speaking with tongues, as their utterances were intelligible; but in the earlier stages the ecstatic character was very prominent. One of the most striking examples of this is found in I Sam. 19:20-24. When Saul's messengers came to Samuel and the prophets, the Spirit of God came upon them and they prophesied. Saul sent messengers a second and a third time, and they had the same experiences as did the first. Then he went himself, and the Spirit of God came upon him and he prophesied before Samuel. He stripped off his clothes and prophesied, and he lay down naked all that day and all that night. The Testament of Job (46 ff.) indicates that there was a phenomenon in the Judaism of Paul's day which was not unlike that of speaking with tongues.

The prophets in the Pauline churches were quite like the Old Testament prophets. The purpose of their message was to comfort and edify the Christians. They were inspired men, and they spoke because they had a revelation from the Lord.

(b) The life and thought of the Mediterranean world.

Paul's discussion in I Cor. 12:1-3 would seem to indicate that he was warning the Corinthians against spiritual manifestations which were from heathen sources. There was undoubtedly a phenomenon in heathen worship which was very similar to the glossolalia of the Christians. Celsus (*Contra. Cels.* VII, 8 f.) and Lucian (*Alex.* 13) spoke of this phenomenon as existing among the pagans. It is now generally admitted that the initiate into the mystery-cults believed he received the deity into himself, and as a result, he sometimes lost control of himself and was possessed by the deity. Under the domination of this power he gave expression to his ecstatic feelings, and what he said was unintelligible to his hearers. The experiences of Lucius in the mysteries of Isis, as related by Apulius, are very similar to the experiences of Paul, as related in II Cor. 12:1-4. Lucius says: "I drew near to the confines of death; I trod the threshold of Porserpine; I was borne through

all the elements and returned. At midnight I saw the sun flashing with a bright light; gods of the world above, gods of the world below, into their presence I came.”<sup>16</sup>

These special manifestations which resulted from the possession of divine power seem to have been common to Jews, and Gentiles, and Christians. Many of the Christians at Corinth had perhaps experienced these ecstatic feelings, as initiates into the mystery-cults, and after they had become Christians, they would attribute these former experiences to the influence of evil spirits. Paul told them that their attitude towards Christ determined whether the manifestation was the result of an evil, or a good spirit.

(c) The life and thought of the primitive church.

We cannot be certain about the special manifestations of the Spirit in the early church. Scholars differ in their interpretation of the Pentecostal phenomenon of speaking with tongues. It is quite probable that the Pentecostal experiences, which are recorded in the second chapter of Acts, and the experiences at the home of Cornelius, which are recorded in the tenth chapter of Acts, were the same in character as those in Corinth which Paul discussed. According to Acts, a special bestowment of the Spirit was made to men. This was sometimes made directly by God, and sometimes it was the result of the laying on of the apostles' hands; but in either case, special gifts were the result. While we do not know just what the belief in the early church was concerning the gifts of the Spirit, it seems almost certain that there must have been some conception which was the basis of the account which we have in Acts, and Paul inherited that, and it became a part of his Christian thinking.

(d) His own personal experience.

Paul's Jewish training, his Greek environment, and the life and thought of the church into which he entered helped to produce his experience of spiritual gifts, and this experience became authoritative for him. He believed in the reality of these spiritual manifestations, because he had experienced them in his own life. He would not forbid anyone to speak with tongues, because this manifestation was an indication of the Spirit's presence, and to forbid the expression of this manifestation, would be to interfere with the Spirit. Paul believed men could speak with tongues, for he had possessed that gift himself, and could speak with tongues more than all the rest. He believed in

<sup>16</sup> See Kirsopp Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, p. 205.

ecstatic experiences, because he had had visions and revelations and had been caught up into Paradise.

In his effort to regulate these spiritual manifestations in the church worship, Paul was guided by the purpose which he sought to accomplish. He wanted to build up the individual, and he was anxious that the individual should help him build up the community. Paul insisted that one should take the part in worship which builds himself up spiritually, and at the same time edifies others. He held that the manifestations of the Spirit are granted for some helpful purpose, and that they should be used only as they serve that purpose. Paul believed the one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks with a tongue, because he is more helpful to others. He thanked God that he spoke with tongues more than all the rest, but he said he would rather speak five words with the understanding, so that he would be helpful to others, than to speak ten thousand words in a tongue.

Paul declared that the greatest gift is love, and he said the man who possesses that gift will seek, not his own advantage, but that which is for the good of all. While Paul urged the individual to speak to himself and to God, if there was no one present who could interpret his feelings, yet he urged the community not to prevent him from speaking (I Cor. 14:39, 40). This illustrates Paul's principle of the law of love. While he urged those who had the gift of tongues to keep silent in the church, on the ground that they did not help others, yet he urged the church to tolerate them, on the ground that they might injure them if they did not.

Paul was confident that on these matters he was expressing the commandment of the Lord (I Cor. 14:37), and he did not permit others to set their inspiration over against his instruction. He said: "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you that they are the commandment of the Lord." This was one of his most positive declarations of the fact that he believed he was Christ's representative and that Christ was speaking through him. Being the ambassador of Christ, he claimed authority to regulate the worship of the Corinthian Church, and he told those who claimed to be prophets that they could prove their inspiration by recognizing his authority. He severely rebuked any who would presume to question his authority. He said if any should be ignorant of the fact that the things which he was speaking were the commandments of the Lord he would have to be ignorant, but his ignorance would not alter the facts. Paul was confident that the law

of love was the law of Christ, and hence he could enforce these regulations as being the commandment of Christ himself. Paul believed Christ was dwelling within him and was speaking through him.

In his discussion of spiritual gifts, Paul made only one reference to the Old Testament, and that was to prove that tongues are a sign to the unbelieving and not to them that believe (I Cor. 14:21, 22). This quotation is from Isaiah (28:11 ff.), and in its original connection, had no reference to ecstatic experiences, like those of the New Testament, and it was only by a rabbinical method of interpretation that Paul could put that meaning into it. Paul derived his conception of speaking with tongues from other sources, and then read it back into the Old Testament. In the development of his notion of spiritual gifts, Paul received elements from his Jewish training, from his Greek environment, and from the life and thought of the church into which he entered, and in the loom of his own experience he wove these into what became truth to him, and he insisted upon his conclusions as being truth to others.

### *Conduct of Women in the Meetings*

It is a principle of the gospel that in Christ there is neither male nor female. Paul announced that principle in his letter to the Galatians (3:28), and he may have proclaimed it when he was at Corinth. It is quite probable that some of the Christian women at Corinth insisted on having equal privileges with the men in the public assemblies, and perhaps some of them were coming to the meetings unveiled, and were insisting on the right of praying and prophesying. It seems almost certain that the church, in the letter sent to Paul, had asked about the place of women in the public assemblies, and he discussed this at some length in two important passages in I Corinthians.

#### a. Statement of Paul's teaching.

Paul maintained that religious equality does not annul the divine ordinance that woman is in subjection to man. To disregard this relation, which God ordained, would bring a scandal upon the church, and it would also be contrary to nature and to the general customs.

It seems quite probable that some of the women urged in favor of their attending the meetings unveiled that, if the Spirit should prompt them to pray or prophesy, it would be difficult for them to respond if they had their heads covered. Paul insisted that a woman should not pray or prophesy with her head unveiled, for that would place her in a position of dishonor and disrespect. Her womanly nature is expressed in the covering of her head, and Paul declared that if she

insisted on laying this aside, she should go the full extent in claiming equality with the masculine sex, and have her hair cut short. Paul was not discussing, in I Corinthians 11:2-16, woman's right to pray or prophesy in public, but her right to attend the meetings with her head unveiled, and he was emphatic in his assertion that she did not have this right. He said such a thing would be contrary to decency, and to general custom, as well as to the divine order. He did not say woman had the right to participate in the public worship, but he did say she should not pray or prophesy with her head unveiled.

In another connection (I Cor. 14:33-36), Paul discussed woman's right to speak in the assembly of the church, and he was emphatic in his statement that she should keep silent "for it is not permitted unto them to speak." He told the women to ask their husbands at home, if they wanted to learn anything, and to keep silent in the meetings, "for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church."

b. Sources which contributed to the development of Paul's thought.  
(a) His Jewish inheritance.

The conception of woman's position in religion which Paul inherited from Judaism was practically the same as the one which he stated in I Corinthians. Woman was granted the privileges of religion, but she did not participate in the worship of the temple, or of the synagogue to the extent of assuming leadership. It was man's place to lead in the worship. Paul brought this Jewish conception over into his Christian thinking, and it undoubtedly influenced him when he was called upon to decide what woman's position in the church should be.

Paul used this Jewish conception, along with the Old Testament, to prove his argument, and his method was in keeping with his rabbinical training. He said a man ought not to have his head covered, because he is the image and glory of God; but a woman ought to have her head covered, because she is the glory of man. Man was not created for the woman, but the woman was created for the man; hence she ought to have the sign of authority on her head. For her to pray with uncovered head would be equivalent to declaring that she was on an equality with man, and Paul's Jewish training would not permit him to yield to that position. He also argued that a woman should have "a sign of authority on her head, because of the angels." He did not explain what he meant by that statement, and we cannot be absolutely certain of his meaning. There are two possible interpretations. He might have held that if she prayed with uncovered head she would be a cause of temptation to the angels, and the belief that angels looked upon

women with lustful eyes is not uncommon in Jewish literature. He might have meant that the sight of a woman praying with unveiled head might be an occasion of offense to the angels. This would be equivalent to saying that women, even if they do not hesitate to shock men, should hesitate to shock the angels, who are present at the meetings.<sup>17</sup>

As pointed out above, one reason why Paul did not permit women to speak in the meetings was the Jewish idea that women should be in subjection to their husbands, and he called attention to the fact that this was according to the law (I Cor. 14:34).

(b) The life and thought of the Mediterranean world.

Paul's instructions to the Christian women of Corinth should be studied in connection with woman's position in the Greek world. The Greek wife was modest, and her life was one of seclusion, but there was a class of women, who were called "hetairai," that put themselves forward. These hetairai were women of culture, and they could talk intelligently on the topics of the day and sing, and tell jokes; but they were of questionable morals. Greek wives were kept in seclusion, but men associated freely and openly with the hetairai.<sup>18</sup> A Greek woman, by speaking in a public meeting, would be casting suspicion on her character, and Paul was anxious to protect the church from reproach. There were added reasons at Corinth why Christian women should be modest. Corinth was a dissolute city, and licentiousness was practised in the name of religion. It is said that there were a thousand women consecrated to immorality at the shrine of Aphrodite. Paul wanted to protect the church as well as the Christian women. The faithful wives of the Mediterranean world veiled themselves, lived modestly, and were content to occupy a position which was inferior to that of their husbands; and Paul was anxious that Christian women should be exemplars of purity and modesty.

(c) The life and thought of the primitive Christian community.

Very little is known about the position of women in the worship of the primitive Christian group, but as the movement was largely Jewish, it can be assumed that her position was about the same as it was in the Jewish worship. Perhaps the thought of the primitive Christian community contributed little or nothing to the development of Paul's notion of woman's place in the worship of the church.

<sup>17</sup> See Int. Crit. Com.

<sup>18</sup> See S. Angus, *The Environment of Early Christianity*, 1915, pp. 44 ff.

## (d) Christian experience.

In his effort to prove that a woman ought not to pray with her head unveiled, Paul appealed to the common experience of mankind. He said it is a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, and hence it ought to be a shame for her to be unveiled. He made his appeal to their sense of propriety. He asked, "Is it seemly that a woman pray to God unveiled?" and the experience of the people to whom he was writing would lead them to reply in the negative. He appealed to their feelings, to their reason, and to nature itself. He said nature teaches that if a man have long hair it is a dishonor to him, but if a woman have long hair it is a glory to her.

Paul made his final appeal to the custom of all the churches. He said if there is any man who seemeth to be contentious, and is not disposed to accept his conclusions on these matters, such an one is without any precedent to sustain him, for "we have no such custom, neither the churches of God" (I Cor. 11:16).  $\eta\mu\epsilon\varsigma$  may refer either to Paul, or to all the apostles. It may mean that Paul did not permit women to go unveiled in churches where he had authority, or it may mean that he did not know of any apostle who permitted this, and that there was no church anywhere where such a thing was tolerated.

Paul's chief reason why women should be veiled was based upon feeling: it was unseemly, for he regarded it as being the same thing for a woman to be unveiled as to be shaven. He had been accustomed to seeing modest women veiled, and he could not think of them desiring to be unveiled. He appealed to the sense of propriety in others, and asked them whether it is seemly that a woman should pray to God unveiled. He further substantiated his position with arguments from the Scriptures which he put forth in rabbinical style, and then he fell back on the custom of the churches.

## CHURCH DISCIPLINE

*Statement of Paul's Teaching*

Paul taught that the Christian should be governed in his relation to others by Christ's law, which is the law of love (Gal. 6:1, 2). The church should be governed in its treatment of an erring Christian by the well-being of all concerned. Those who are spiritual should seek in all gentleness to win back the erring one. The strong should bear the burden of the weak. But when one persists in living a life which is injurious to others, Christ's law of love demands harsh treat-

ment. Paul's instructions concerning the treatment of the fornicator in the Corinthian Church is an illustration of this fact (I Cor. 5:4 ff.). This man was living in unlawful relationship with his father's wife, and in a lost epistle, Paul had urged the church to withdraw fellowship from this man who was living in fornication (I Cor. 5:9-13). It seems that the Corinthians, instead of following Paul's advice, took the side of the man whom he was denouncing. In the next epistle, which is our I Corinthians, Paul rebuked them for being "puffed up" when they should have felt outraged, and he urged them to "put away the wicked man." He urged them to deliver him over to Satan.

In his instructions concerning the treatment of the fornicator, Paul virtually commanded the Corinthians to follow his advice. He told them that, although absent in body, he was present in spirit, and as though present, he had already judged the man, and they were to come together in the name of the Lord Jesus and do as he had instructed them.

#### *Sources from which Paul Derived his Convictions*

##### a. His Jewish inheritance.

If the man in question at Corinth was living in unmarried relationship, he was manifestly violating the Jewish law; and if he was living in married relationship he was condemned by the law, and in either case he was guilty of adultery. These moral principles of the law, which had become a part of Paul's thinking, undoubtedly influenced him in his instructions to Christians, for he would demand of them the same high standard which is taught in the law.

According to Jewish law, a curse was to be pronounced upon a wife who was accused of adultery but denied the charge, and the formula for pronouncing this curse is given in Num. 5:11-28. If the woman was innocent, the curse would not injure her, but if she was guilty, Jehovah would make her thigh to fall away and her body to swell. It would be easy for a Jew to extend that curse to include all who were violating God's commandments. The notion that the judgment of God followed prophetic denunciation was common in Jewish thought. A striking illustration of that fact was the cursing of Hananiah by the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 28:12-17). Another illustration was the cursing of Ananias and Sapphira by Peter (Acts 5:1-11). Paul's admonition to deliver the fornicator in Corinth "unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh" was the Jewish formula of excommunication. He was commanding them to pronounce the Jewish ban against the one who was bringing reproach upon the church. If the punishment did not follow immedi-

ately after the pronouncing of the curse, that was an indication that there was room for repentance. If the person repented, the curse could be recalled, for the one who had pronounced it could remove it.

b. The life and thought of the Mediterranean world.

The custom of pronouncing a curse was common among the Greeks. Theseus pronounced a curse on Hippolytus which was intended to produce death, and in case he did not die at once he was to be exiled. I Cor. 5:4, 5 should be read in the light of the ancient custom of execration, which consisted in turning a person over to the gods of the lower world.<sup>19</sup> A number of examples have been brought to light from Greek papyri which would indicate that Paul was advising the Corinthians to perform a solemn act of execration, and that they, being Greeks, would understand what he wanted them to do.

A curse pronounced upon one who was offending the deity seems to have been a common conception of the ancient world. The Jews had the notion of turning the evil-doer over to Satan, and Paul inherited this belief. This idea which came from his Jewish training was strengthened by his contact with the thought of the Greek world. Paul had lived in Corinth, and he knew the Corinthians would understand what he meant by delivering the transgressor over to Satan, so he did not feel it was necessary for him to explain what he wanted them to do.

c. The life and thought of the primitive church.

It is not probable that the subject of church discipline was definitely formulated in the primitive church, for the church itself was not well organized. We do not know just what the situation was. We do not know to what extent the church excluded unworthy members, or to what extent the curse was pronounced upon those who, by their manner of life, were defying God in a conspicuous manner. Acts gives the example of the death of Ananias and Sapphira which was caused by the curse pronounced by Peter, and of the curse which Peter pronounced upon Simon of Samaria. Acts also gives the account of the curse pronounced by Paul upon Elymas, the sorcerer of Cyprus. The early church undoubtedly had about the same attitude towards discipline that was found in the Jewish communities, for it was largely dominated by Jewish ideals.

d. His own personal experience.

Paul's own personal experience and the purpose which he had before him played an important part in the development of his conception

<sup>19</sup> Adolf Deissmann (*Licht vom Osten*, 1908, p. 218; Eng. trans., 1910, pp. 303 ff.) says: "A person who wished to injure an enemy or to punish an evil-doer consecrated him by incantation and tablet to the powers of darkness below."

of church discipline. In his instruction to the churches, he urged them to be governed by the desire to help the individual with whom they were dealing, hence in his letter to the Galatians, he urged them to restore the one who is overtaken in a fault, and to do it in the spirit of gentleness. He urged them to bear each other's burdens and help each other along. He had doubtless seen many who had made mistakes, but had been dealt with gently by the church and had been restored to favor and loyalty, and hence he urged this on the church as a policy. In dealing with the fornicator, who was puffed up and obstinate, he urged excommunication and the pronouncing of the curse, because he knew from experience that this would be best for him and for the church as well. Paul's experience in this case, as in many others, was determined by the beliefs which he derived from Judaism and from the life and thought of the world in which he lived, but these beliefs had been vitalized by their expression in life and action. It is not probable that Paul ever asked himself whence he derived the conviction that the purity of the church should be upheld by pronouncing the curse in extreme cases. He knew from experience that it worked, for he had pronounced the curse himself and he had seen others pronounce it.

#### OFFERINGS FOR THE POOR AT JERUSALEM

##### *Statement of Paul's Teaching*

Under the leadership of Paul, the churches of Macedonia and Achaia made a contribution for "the poor among the saints that are at Jerusalem." The Gentile Christians were led to make this offering on the ground that they were debtors to the Jewish Christians; for inasmuch as they had been made partakers of the spiritual things of the primitive group, they felt that they ought to share with them of their material things. Paul hoped through this offering to accomplish two very definite things. In the first place, he believed it would help to meet a real need in the Jerusalem Church; and in the second place, he believed it would help to bind together the Gentile and Jewish elements in the church (See Rom. 15:31, 32).

In the Galatian letter (2:10), Paul referred to his agreement with the leaders of the Jerusalem Church that he should remember the poor, and he added that he was zealous to do that very thing. He did not urge the offering in the Galatian letter because he had other more important matters to discuss, but he had given orders concerning it to all the churches of Galatia (I Cor. 16:1), and they had apparently re-

sponded to his appeal so liberally that they did not need any further word of exhortation on that point.

Paul urged the Corinthians to have the offering ready so that there would not need to be any collection when he came (I Cor. 16:1-4). He exhorted them to lay by on the first day of the week and to give as they had been prospered. He said he had given orders to all the churches of Galatia, and it seems that they were to follow the same method in their giving which he had outlined for the Corinthians. In his second letter to the Corinthians, he commended the liberality of the churches of Macedonia in ministering to the saints (II Cor. 8:1-5), but it seems that the Corinthian Church did not respond very enthusiastically to his appeal, and Titus was sent to enlist them in greater liberality (II Cor. 8:6).

In his letter to the Romans, Paul referred to these offerings which he was soon to take to Jerusalem (Rom. 15:26). He emphasized the fact that the churches of Macedonia and Achaia gave because it was their good pleasure. It was a free gift which they made, and they gave because they felt they were debtors.

*Sources from which Paul Derived his Conviction and upon which he Based his Appeal*

a. His Jewish inheritance.

It was customary for the Jews of the Diaspora to send gifts to Jerusalem. They were required to send the half-shekel which was used to defray the expenses connected with public worship in the temple. This tax was required of every male Israelite who was twenty years of age, or over, regardless of whether he lived in Palestine or in the Gentile world. In addition to this, the Jews of the Dispersion, as well as the Jews of Palestine, made their gifts to the priests.<sup>20</sup> In addition to these gifts it was common for the Jews of the Dispersion to make freewill offerings to the temple. Alabarch Alexander of Alexandria sent to Jerusalem gold and silver to cover the gates of the court.<sup>21</sup> Even Gentiles sometimes sent gifts to the temple.

b. The life and thought of the primitive church.

According to Acts 20:35, Paul, in his address to the Ephesian elders, quoted a statement of Jesus to the effect that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." If Paul knew these words of the Master when he wrote I Corinthians, it is strange that he did not make use of them.

<sup>20</sup> See Emil Schurer, *The Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ*, Divis., II, Vol. I, pp. 247 f.

<sup>21</sup> See Sch. Div. II, Vol. I, p. 253.

He was anxious that he should have an offering from all the Gentile churches for the poor at Jerusalem. The Corinthian Church had begun to make a contribution, and a year had passed by and it had not been completed. Paul was urging them to finish what they had begun, and it would seem that a statement from Jesus would be the most effective argument that could be used; but instead of using that, he cited the example of Jesus. The illustration was not taken from anything which Jesus did during his public ministry, but from what he did in leaving heaven to come to earth. In doing that he gave up for the sake of others—"though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might become rich" (II Cor. 8:8-10).

The primitive church must have been noted for its liberality. The first part of Acts contains many striking traditions which illustrate this spirit of generosity. It tells of those who gave all their possessions to a common fund (Acts 2:44, 45; 4:32-37), and of those who, to gain favor, pretended to have given all when they kept back a part (Acts 5:1-11). It tells about the selection of the "seven" who were to look after the poor by supplying their wants from this common fund (Acts 6:1-6). It tells about the young church at Antioch sending an offering by the hand of Barnabas and Saul to the church at Jerusalem to help those who were suffering because of the famine (Acts 11:27-30). All these traditions would indicate that the primitive church must have been noted for its liberality, and that the Christians helped wherever there was need, and that the need was greatest at Jerusalem. Paul must have inherited that desire to help, and especially the mother church, and it must have influenced him in his determination to get an offering from the Gentile churches.

### c. Authority of the apostolic leaders.

According to the statement in Gal. 2:10, the apostolic leaders at Jerusalem had urged Paul to remember the poor, and if he regarded this as a command to be enforced on all the churches, we would expect him to refer to it in his exhortations. He was anxious that the Corinthians should have fellowship in this work, and they were slow in responding, and if he had regarded the authority of the apostles at Jerusalem as having special weight, it seems that he would have referred to it as an added incentive; but the only mention he made of it was in the Galatian letter, and then he treated it lightly. He said the apostolic leaders imparted nothing to him, for when they saw the grace that had been given to him, they gave him the right hand of fellowship, and they wanted him to remember the poor, and he said he was zealous to do that

before they had said anything about it. Paul virtually declared that he was remembering the poor, not because the apostles required it, for he had been zealous along those lines before they had said anything about it, but because it was what the Christian ought to do.

d. The sense of Christian duty.

In encouraging the Corinthians to give, Paul appealed to their sense of the Christian's obligation. He referred to the grace of giving as it was manifested in the churches of Macedonia, and declared that in their fellowship in ministering to the saints they gave beyond their power, and the explanation of their liberality was that they had first given themselves to the Lord. Paul urged the Corinthians to abound in the grace of giving as they abounded in everything else. He very discreetly said he was not giving a commandment, but was seeking through the earnestness of others to prove the sincerity of their love (II Cor. 8:1-8). He gave it as his judgment that it was expedient for them to complete what they had begun a year before. He commended their readiness to will to give, but he urged them out of their ability to do what they had planned.

Paul demonstrated in the appeal which he made to the Corinthians that he was a master. The whole passage would indicate that he was anxious about the gift, and that he had some misgivings whether it would be made, but he wrote as though it was so evident that they would be ready with the offering that it was needless to even mention it. He said he knew their willingness and he had boasted to the churches of Macedonia that Achaia had been ready for a year (II Cor. 9:1-5). His purpose, he said, in sending Titus and others was not to force them to take the offering, for that had undoubtedly been attended to. They came as a precaution, lest the offering might have been neglected, and his glorying would then be void, and if some from Macedonia should be along with him he would be put to shame. After Paul expressed this confidence in them, he urged them to give bountifully and cheerfully, assuring them that God loves a cheerful giver.

e. The Old Testament Scriptures.

Paul was anxious to equalize giving so that those who had could make up for those who lacked, and to make his exhortation as forceful as possible, he used an illustration from the Old Testament concerning the gathering of the manna (II Cor. 8:15). His illustration is taken from Ex. 16:18 and is introduced by the formula—"It is written." Paul urged the Corinthians to sow bountifully and to do it cheerfully, and he assured them that if they did God would make his grace abound

upon them, and to make his statement more convincing he quoted from the 112th Psalm (II Cor. 9:9). His use of the Old Testament in these two instances would not indicate that he got his idea of taking an offering and giving liberally upon the first day of the week from the Old Testament; it would indicate that the idea came from other sources, and that he used the Old Testament to prove his point, because he regarded it as having special authority.

Paul placed the matter of giving on the basis of Christian duty, and used all possible means to get the Christians to act. He felt that their relation to Christ and to each other should give them a common interest, and the obligation of the Gentile Christians to the Jerusalem group, who had given the gospel, should prompt them to desire to help them in their need. Paul believed Christ's example and the teaching of the law should compel them to give and to give liberally.

### SUMMARY

In the development of his idea of the church, its ordinances, its worship, its discipline, and its offerings, Paul received influences from many different sources. His Jewish training and the modification of this by his contact with the life and thought of the Greek world furnished the basis for his later Christian thinking. To this was added what he received from the church into which he entered, and for his conception of the church, this must have been an important contribution. He did not consider the elements derived from the primitive church as final, or he would not have been free to modify them, but he did undoubtedly consider them of great value. That which he received from his Jewish training, and from the life and thought of the world in which he lived, and from the church into which he entered was modified, as it worked itself out in his own experience and in the experience of others. A thing was true to him when it had been substantiated in life, and he felt free to urge a course of action upon others if he had seen it verified in experience. Paul urged Christians to conform to customs and to perform duties because they appeal to one's sense of right and obligation. He corroborated his teaching concerning the church with illustrations and quotations from the Old Testament. The manner in which Paul used the Old Testament in these various instances plainly indicates that he regarded it as authoritative, and that he felt it was the strongest argument that could be used, but it would also indicate that in many cases, instead of deriving the truth he was emphasizing from the Old

Testament, he had received it from other sources and had read it back into the Old Testament. In theory Paul evidently regarded the Scriptures as being of supreme authority, but in reality there was an authority which was more vital to him than the Scriptures, and that was his own personal experience. In the light of his Christian experience he read the Scriptures and found that for which he was looking.

## CHAPTER V

### THE LIFE OF THE CHRISTIAN IN THE WORLD

The Christians who were living in pagan communities, like those to which Paul was writing, had to adjust themselves to many difficult and perplexing situations, because of their relation to the world of which they were a part. It is evident that some of these Christians had asked Paul's advice on some of these relationships. In answering their questions and instructing them along important lines, Paul discussed many of the most important relationships of life.

#### THE CHRISTIAN IN HIS RELATION TO MARRIAGE

Many questions arose in the Christian community at Corinth concerning the Christian's relation to marriage, and in their letter to Paul, they had undoubtedly asked his advice on some of these questions. It seems that there were those in Corinth who were altogether opposed to marriage on the part of Christians, and there were those who believed marriage should be merely a spiritual relationship. It seems that they asked him whether it is right for a Christian to marry, and if so, whether a Christian should marry a pagan. They were anxious to know whether a man or woman who had been converted to Christianity after marriage should seek to be separated from the pagan companion. They wanted to know whether widows should re-marry. Paul's reply to these questions furnishes one of the best opportunities we have to study his conception of authority. The seventh chapter of I Corinthians is taken up with this discussion.

#### *Statement of Paul's Teaching*

Paul held that celibacy is better than marriage, providing one has the gift of continency. He urged the unmarried and the widows to remain as he was, and thus be free from the cares of the home, so that they could give themselves unreservedly to the service of Christ; but if they did not have the gift of continency, he permitted them to marry, and even encouraged it lest they should fall into temptation.

Paul's instructions to the married were more definite. Perhaps an ascetical tendency had developed in Corinth which caused some conscientious Christians to regard marriage as an imperfect, if not unholy, relationship. Where this tendency prevailed divorce would be regarded as desirable. When both husband and wife were Christians Paul

urged them not to separate, and in case they did separate, he declared that neither one should marry again. The separated parties might become reconciled, but as long as the other lived neither could marry again. As indicated above, the Corinthian Church, like those in all pagan communities, had the situation of a believing husband and an unbelieving wife, or a believing wife and an unbelieving husband, and the members were anxious to know what was the duty of Christians thus yoked up to unbelievers. Paul told them it was not necessary to seek separation, and he even encouraged them, providing the pagan companion was willing, to remain in the married state. By doing this the believer might save the unbeliever. The Christian member of the marriage does not need to fear that their children will be unholy, for the believer sanctifies the unbelieving partner in the union, and the children that are born of such a marriage are holy. The husband and wife are one flesh, and the unbeliever through union with the believer is sanctified, and the children that are born of such a union are holy in the same sense they would be if both partners were Christians. If the unbelieving partner is unwilling to live with the Christian and departs, the union is severed and the Christian is no longer bound.

In I Cor. 7:36-38 Paul discussed a man's attitude towards his virgin, and the meaning of the passage is very indefinite. According to the traditional view, he had in mind the father's duty to his unmarried daughter. According to this interpretation, Paul was giving instructions to fathers or guardians of virgins of marriageable age to guide them in their Christian duty. He told them to do what they felt was their duty under the circumstances. If for any reason it should seem best for the virgin to marry, she should be given in marriage, for this would not be sinful; but the father who should think it best for his daughter not to marry, and should keep her as a virgin, would do better than the one who gave his daughter in marriage. Paul felt that there would be no sin in either case, but he gave his preference to those who should remain single. Many modern scholars think Paul had an entirely different situation in mind. They think he referred to the custom, which later became common, of men and women living together in spiritual union. This was to test their strength and to enable them to win a greater victory over Satan.<sup>1</sup> If Paul had this custom in mind,

<sup>1</sup> See H. Weinel, *Paulus*, 1904, p. 207, Eng. trans. 1906, p. 268; Kirsopp Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul*, pp. 184 ff.; and F. C. Conybeare, *Myth, Magic and Morals*, pp. 212 f. Conybeare says this custom of spiritual marriages was widespread at this time.

then what he sought to do was to protect those who were living in this relationship, not by forbidding them to marry, but by permitting them to marry in case it was impossible for them to conduct themselves properly in the spiritual relationship. If Paul had that custom in mind, it is evident that he believed it was better for man and woman to live in spiritual companionship than to marry, and that marriage should be resorted to only as a necessity.

In his advice to widows Paul said, "A wife is bound for so long a time as her husband liveth." If she is separated from her husband she has no right to marry as long as he is alive; "but if the husband be dead, she is free to be married to whom she will; only in the Lord." Paul taught that the woman whose husband is dead can marry if she desires, providing she marries a Christian; but he gave it as his judgment that she would be happier if she remained as she was.

#### *Sources from which Paul Derived his Conception*

##### a. His Jewish inheritance.

The Jews exalted the marriage relationship, but they evidently regarded it as imperfect, for according to the Levitical law, sexual intercourse made one ceremonially unclean for a day, and the Hebrew mother had to be purified after giving birth to a child. Paul's desire to save virgins from "tribulation in the flesh," which comes to married women, was perhaps the reflection of Jewish apocalyptic thought. In Jewish apocalypses special troubles are predicted for married women in the final tribulation. There are to be monstrous and premature births,<sup>2</sup> and mothers will devour their children.<sup>3</sup> Paul did not use any of these apocalyptic pictures of horror, but he was perhaps influenced by them in advising women to remain in virginity.

##### b. The thought of the Mediterranean world.

A strong ascetic tendency was developing throughout the Mediterranean world of Paul's day. The Stoic type of philosophy was popular, and it emphasized self-denial for the sake of a higher good. Epictetus<sup>4</sup> made a statement that is very similar to the one which is recorded in I Cor. 7:29 to the effect that those who have wives should be as though they had none. Both expressed the thought that one should be without distraction in order that he might do the service of God. Epic-

<sup>2</sup> See II Esd. 5:8;6:21.

<sup>3</sup> See Enoch 99:5.

<sup>4</sup> Diss. II:22.69.

tetus quite likely expressed the thought of the earlier Stoics, and while it is not probable that Paul received his idea from reading their literature, the Stoic philosophy was talked everywhere and was common property, and Paul was undoubtedly influenced by it.

Among the Therapeuta, which are described by Philo in *De vita contemplativa*, men and women lived together in spiritual relationship. It seems that the men lived apart from the women, but all came together for worship.<sup>5</sup> It is quite certain that spiritual marriages were common in the church during the second and third centuries, and it is possible that they existed in Paul's day, and that he had them in mind in his discussion in I Cor. 7:36-38.

c. The life and thought of the church into which he entered.

In his instructions concerning the separation of husband and wife, Paul made his statement as the charge of the Lord: "But unto the married I give charge, yea not I, but the Lord" (I Cor. 7:10). The command was that neither should leave the other, and in case there was separation, they should remain unmarried or be reconciled to each other. Paul undoubtedly referred to some teaching of Jesus concerning divorce, which he had received, and he believed the teaching of Jesus settled the question beyond dispute. When Paul knew what Jesus had said upon a subject he had no thought but that this was final, hence he told the Corinthians that if a Christian should leave his wife he should not marry again.

d. The purpose which he sought to accomplish.

In forming his opinion concerning the marriage of virgins, Paul did not have any teaching of the Lord to guide him, but he expressed his conviction of the subject, and he believed he had obtained mercy of the Lord to be trustworthy (I Cor. 7:25, 26). He was not making a distinction between his own opinions and his inspired utterances, but he was distinguishing between his own utterances and the expressed commands of Christ. He did not mean to state that he was sometimes speaking with apostolic authority and sometimes as a private individual, for he believed all his teachings were given with apostolic authority. Paul knew of definite teachings of the Master which answered some of the questions he was discussing, but he did not know of any teaching of

<sup>5</sup> The Philonic authorship of *De vita contemplativa* has long been called in question, but the weight of present scholarship is in the favor of its genuineness. For a citation of authorities see "Shirley Jackson Case," *The Historicity of Jesus*, 1912, p. 106, footnote.

Jesus which covered other problems which had been raised. He had his own convictions in regard to these, and he believed he had the Spirit of Christ and fairly represented him. He believed that if Christ had spoken on these subjects he would have expressed an opinion very similar to the one he was giving.

Paul received from different sources the notions which he combined to form his conviction concerning marriage. He received ascetical ideas from the life and thought of the world in which he lived, and he was influenced by these. He received from his Jewish training the thought that the present order was soon to end in a wonderful cataclysmic manner, and that married women would have special trials at that time, and he was influenced by this notion. Perhaps the greatest influence in the formation of his opinion was the purpose which he had before him. His objections to marriage were to a large extent of a practical character. They were living in times of great distress, and because of these conditions he believed it was better for a person to be single. He believed they were living in the last days, and hence he felt a person should be as free as possible from earthly entanglements. Because of the shortness of the time and the urgency of the work before the Christians, he felt they should be as free as possible from cares. They should be content to remain in a position that would enable them to devote all their energies to the things of God (I Cor. 7:32-34).

In I Corinthians Paul seems to have placed marriage on a very low plane. He held that it is better to remain unmarried, but because of fornication, marriage is permitted in case of necessity. The seventh chapter of I Corinthians should be read in the light of the purpose which Paul had before him. He was not writing a treatise on marriage, but was answering some questions which had been put to him in a particular situation. Corinth was noted for licentiousness, and the church was not entirely free from this immoral influence, for a member was living in unlawful relationship with his father's wife and the church did not exclude him. Paul believed it is good to live a celibate life but on account of the temptations with which they were surrounded, he said it was better for some of them to marry.

In his instructions concerning the separation of the Christian from his pagan companion, Paul was guided by the practical situation. The approaching end was so near that each should be content to remain as he was. It is better for a man who has a wife not to seek to be loosed, and it is better for a man who does not have a wife not to seek one.

It was the practical situation which guided him in his discussion of the remarriage of widows. He said it was his judgment that they would be happier if they remained as they were, and he added that he thought he had the spirit of God in that matter.

### THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATION TO SLAVERY

Slavery was a universal institution in the Mediterranean world of Paul's day. Many of the Christians were either slaves or the owners of slaves, and questions would naturally be raised concerning the relation of Christian masters to their slaves and of Christian slaves to their masters, and Paul would inevitably be called upon to discuss these important relationships.

#### *A Statement of Paul's Teaching*

It is in Paul's letter to Philemon where his position is most definitely stated. Onesimus, a slave of Philemon, had run away from his master, and under the influence of Paul had become a Christian. Paul sent him back to his master and at the same time wrote Philemon a letter urging him to receive Onesimus as a brother beloved. In I Corinthians Paul urged the Christians to remain in the state in which they were, and if they were bondservants, they were not to seek to be free. According to this principle there was but one thing for Onesimus to do after he had become a Christian, and that was to return to his master. Paul did not tell Philemon to free Onesimus, nor did he even intimate that freedom was the proper thing. He said he had sent him back that Philemon might have him forever, "no longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved." Many writers and teachers have held that, although Paul did not openly condemn slavery, he did indirectly oppose it. They have maintained that he knew it was wrong but refrained from condemning it as a matter of expediency.<sup>6</sup> It is not at all likely that Paul believed slavery was wrong but refrained from condemning it as a matter of expediency. There is no ground for

<sup>6</sup> George Matheson (*Spiritual Development of St. Paul*, 1909, pp. 260 ff.) holds that when Paul wrote I Corinthians he was willing to let slavery alone, not because it is "a thing indifferent, but because all the institutions of time are fleeting and transitory"; but he thinks Paul realized when he wrote the epistle to Philemon, that Christ was to be king of the secular world, and hence he could not be indifferent to slavery. He thinks Paul knew Onesimus was entitled to freedom, and the only reason he did not insist upon his having it was that such a course would have produced a condition of anarchy in the Empire.

the inference that Paul believed the principles he was laying down, when rightly carried out, would ultimately abolish slavery. It is not probable that he had any thought of the destruction of slavery. He did not attempt to justify it; neither did he present any objections to it as an institution. He apparently accepted it without question as one of the institutions of his day, and his only purpose was to breathe the Christian spirit into it.

*Sources from which Paul Derived his Conception*

a. His Jewish inheritance.

Slavery had been a custom of the Jews during all their history, but the condition of the slave among the Jews was much better than among many other peoples. According to the law the Hebrew master must not treat his servant with rigor (Lev. 25:43). The later literature of the Old Testament reveals the attitude of the Jewish masters towards their slaves as being humane and almost brotherly.<sup>7</sup> The master of a Hebrew servant was required to treat him in regard to food and lodging as he treated himself, and he was admonished to deal with him in all things as with a brother.<sup>8</sup> Slaves were admitted to the privileges of worship, and the right of Jewish masters to punish their slaves was limited. The treatment of slaves in Jewish households was kind and in many instances affectionate. Many times master and slave ate of the same food, and the death of a slave was mourned as if he had been a close relative.<sup>9</sup> Paul inherited this Jewish attitude and it necessarily influenced him in his Christian attitude. The problem of the relation of master and slave confronted him in every community where he labored, and the ideals which he had as a Jew helped him in his solution of this problem.

b. The life and thought of the Mediterranean world.

The condition of slaves in the Graeco-Roman world was very different from what it was in Palestine among the Jews. The number of slaves was very large and the treatment became more inhuman as the numbers increased. They were punished with all sorts of cruelties. Juvenal bears witness to the fact that even ladies treated their slave attendants with cruelty. Aristotle regarded a slave as mere chattel, and Cicero apologized for feeling "more than becoming grief" for the

<sup>7</sup> See Job 31:13-15; Pr. 29:19-21.

<sup>8</sup> See Jewish Ency. XI, 404.

<sup>9</sup> See H. D. B., IV, 468.

death of his slave Sositheus. It is said that the slaves in the Roman world outnumbered the freemen two to one, and many times they worked and slept in chains.

The Stoics taught the slaves to endure patiently their bondage and their hardships, for the inner man could be free even though the body were in chains. Paul, who had the Jewish conception of the relation between master and slave, must have been moved by the injustice of the system, as he saw it in the Roman world, and he must have longed to put it on a higher basis by means of the gospel which he preached. He found comfort in the Stoic attitude towards the system, but he was able to put it on a higher plane, for "he that was called in the Lord being a bondservant, is the Lord's freedman" (I Cor. 7:22).

c. The purpose which he had in view.

Paul's conception of brotherhood, which he inherited from Judaism, and which was intensified by his Christian experiences, made him anxious to bring about a condition of real brotherhood between master and servant, when both were in the church. He told Philemon that he had sent Onesimus back in order that he might have him forever, "no longer as a servant, but more than a servant, a brother beloved." Paul was anxious that every man, whether bond or free, should conduct himself in the manner that would bring glory to the cause of Christ. Guided by this purpose he told servants, not to seek liberty, but to obey their masters; and he said liberty is of but little consequence anyway, for the time is short and the Christian slave is Christ's freedman even now. He told masters to treat their servants kindly and regard them as brothers.

Philemon, verses 8 and 9, would indicate that Paul felt he had the right, as an apostle, to command Philemon to receive Onesimus in the right spirit.<sup>10</sup> Paul virtually declared that although he had boldness in Christ to command Philemon to do the things which he ought yet because of his love for Philemon, he beseeches rather than commands. He might command as an apostle, but he beseeches as Paul the aged, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and he intimated that he had confidence that Philemon would heed his entreaty.

<sup>10</sup> M. R. Vincent says: "*ἐπιτάσσειν*, 'to enjoin' or 'to command,' is used rather of commanding which attaches to a definite office and relates to permanent obligations under the office, than for special injunctions for particular occasions" (See Int. Crit. Com. Philem.).

## THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATION TO THE STATE

*Statement of Paul's Teaching*

Paul did not discuss the character of the Roman Empire, nor of the Roman Emperors, but in stating the Christian's relation to the state he did reveal his thought of organized government. This is brought out most strikingly in Rom. 13:1-7. He admonished every Roman to be in subjection to the higher powers, and that undoubtedly represented the attitude which he desired all people to have towards the state. Paul placed this loyalty on the highest basis. The Christian should be loyal to the state because "the powers that be are ordained of God." If the state is a divine institution, then the one who resists the state withstands the ordinance of God. If the state is a divine institution then the one who is disloyal to the state is disloyal to God, and he shall receive judgment for his disloyalty. Notwithstanding the character of many of the Roman officials, Paul regarded them as ministers of God for good. He believed their right to punish was a divine right, for it was to restrain evil doers—"He is a minister of God, an avenger to him that doeth evil." Paul held that Christians should obey the rulers, not merely to escape the wrath that follows disobedience, but for "conscience' sake." The Christian's own sense of duty tells him that he ought to do what the law requires, and he should always be true to his own convictions of right.

Paul taught that the Christian, as a member of the state, should help to support it in every way. One of his fundamental principles was that God's ministers are worthy of their hire, and according to this principle, officials should be supported, for they are God's ministers, giving their time in the interest of the public welfare. Inasmuch as these officials are God ministers for man's good, Christians should pay tribute to help support them. The Christian should be loyal to the state in every way and render to all officials their due. He should render "tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."

*Sources from which Paul Derived his Conception*

## a. His Jewish inheritance.

Paul could scarcely have been influenced by any conception which came to him from purely Jewish sources, for the Jews were opposed to domination by a foreign power, and they came to look upon these nations

which oppressed them as being either the agencies of Satan, or the means God was using to punish his people for their sins. Much of the imagery of apocalyptic literature had its origin in their hatred of these foreign powers. All the hatred which the Jews had for these foreign oppressors was transferred to Rome when Judea became subject to that nation. The Roman Empire was to the Jewish mind the incarnation of cruelty and oppression, and the loyal Jew dreamed of the day when that nation should be destroyed.

The Jew regarded the Roman state as the embodiment of evil, hence he obeyed the officials as a matter of necessity. He paid tribute and custom because he could not help it, but he looked forward to the time when God would overthrow their greatest enemy. That is the import of the imagery in Revelation. Rome, which is identified with the nation, is "Babylon the great," and the emperor is "the beast."

b. The life and thought of the Mediterranean world.

Paul's life in the Empire during his early days at Tarsus, and later in all parts of the East, made him respect and love the state. He was a Roman citizen, and according to Acts, boasted of that fact, and was helped repeatedly by it. At the time Romans was written Christianity had not been distinguished from Judaism by Roman officials, hence Christians were exempt from Emperor-worship. Paul realized that it was the Roman state which made it possible for him and other missionaries to go from province to province and preach the gospel, and according to Acts, he had on several occasions been protected by Roman officials from attacks by Jewish mobs. The life and thought of this larger world in which Paul lived made him feel that this strong power was necessary for the well-being of society and that it was ordained by God. The restraining power of the law on evil-doers, as he had witnessed it, convinced him that these Roman officials, even though they were corrupt, were God's ministers to restrain evil-doers.

c. The life and thought of the church into which he entered.

It is very probable that the primitive church, which was largely Jewish, had the Jewish conception of the Roman state; hence Paul could not have received his broader conception from that source. He may have been influenced by the tradition of the broader attitude expressed by Jesus, for there is a striking resemblance between Paul's principle—"Render tribute to whom tribute is due," and the statement of Jesus—"Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's."

d. The purpose he sought to accomplish.

It should be borne in mind that Paul's discussion of the Christian's relation to the state was in his letter to the Romans. Paul must have

realized that sooner or later the Roman state would distinguish between Christianity and Judaism, and he was anxious that Christians should have the most possible liberty when that time should come. The attitude of the state towards the church in Rome would determine its attitude throughout the Empire, and in order that the attitude might be as favorable as possible, he was anxious that the Roman Christians should be loyal.

It is also significant that the Christian's loyalty to the state should have been emphasized in this letter in which Christian liberty is exalted. The spirit of antinomianism was developing in some Pauline communities. There were those who distorted their liberty and insisted that Christ had made them free from all law, and hence they could do as they pleased. It may be that Paul was afraid of the development of this antinomian spirit in Rome, and to ward it off he emphasized the fact that they should render obedience to the powers that be. Paul was trying to meet a practical situation. These Christians were members of the Roman State, and he wanted to save them from the perils to which they were exposed, and help to make their lives count for the future of the church.

### SUMMARY

In discussing the Christian's relation to the world in which he lived, Paul emphasized his relation to marriage, to slavery, and to the State. In the development of his thought about these various relationships, Paul was influenced from many different sources. The convictions which he inherited from his Jewish training formed the basis of his thinking on these subjects, and this was modified by his contact with the life and thought of the Graeco-Roman world. The ideas which prevailed in the church into which he entered had some influence upon him, and the purpose which he had before him was an important factor. One of the most important of all the influences which helped to determine his thought of the various relationships which the Christian has in the world was the Christian life as he had experienced it, and as he had observed it in others. The Christian has the Spirit of Christ within as his guide, and in his relation to marriage, to slavery, and to the state, he should pursue the course which is in accord with the Spirit's leading. The streams of influence which came from all these various sources produced a conviction in Paul's mind which he believed should control the church. He believed he expressed the will of Christ and that he had a right to command obedience.

## CHAPTER VI

### IMPORTANCE OF THE SOURCES FROM WHICH PAUL DERIVED TRUTH

A careful study of Paul's writings must convince one that he was not dependent upon any one source for the material which became a part of his religious thinking. He was not controlled by any one influence in reaching his conclusions concerning right and duty. He was influenced by all the ideas which he inherited from the past, and by the life and thought of the world in which he lived. Some writers have failed to understand Paul, because they have sought to explain everything in his teaching as having been derived from Judaism. They have assumed that because he grew up in the Jewish religion and was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, and consequently inherited all the Jewish conceptions of religion, that his thought of after years can be explained on the basis of his early training. Other scholars have misunderstood Paul, because they have assumed that the fundamental influence in the development of his thinking was the life and thought of the Graeco-Roman world in which he lived and labored for a long time before he wrote any of his letters. There are others who have failed to understand Paul, because they have ignored his inheritance from the past and from the world in which he lived, and have sought to explain everything on the basis of his Christian experience. They feel that inasmuch as he became a new man when he became a Christian, he must have completely shook off all the influences of Judaism. They felt that his antipathy to the pagan religions and to the thought of the Greek world was so marked that he could not have been influenced by them.

A careful study of Paul's thought reveals the fact that he received from many different sources the ideas which became a part of his Christian thinking. Some of these ideas were used in substantially the same form in which they were received, some of them were modified, and some of them were entirely changed.

#### PAUL'S ESTIMATE OF EXPERIENCE

A thorough investigation of Paul's writings must convince one that the standard by which he determined truth was what we call experience. Experience is with us a broad and indefinite term, and

Paul undoubtedly interpreted it differently from what we do. It is not probable that Paul attempted to determine the various sources from which he derived truth, or the authoritative value of these sources. It is not probable that our conception of experience is the same as was that of Paul, but it is possible to analyze his thought and state it in terms of our own thinking. We are not able to understand Paul until we do this.

### *The Experience due to Supernatural Influence*

Paul felt that there was a divine power which acted upon him from without, and this was always authoritative for him. He interpreted this experience as the revelation or the manifestation of God, and he believed that no one had the right to question the truth which came through this revelation.

#### a. His conversion-experience.

Paul's conversion-experience was something that was to him very real, and it stood out above all the other experiences of his life. He had no doubts about the reality of it, and he believed truth came to him at that time as a revelation from heaven, and hence this was fundamental in his Christian thinking. He accepted the convictions which came to him through his conversion-experience on the authority of a revelation from God.

Paul became convinced that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah of God, and he interpreted the experiences which led him to that conviction as a revelation from God, and he accepted the conviction on the authority of a revelation. He had formerly regarded Jesus as an impostor, and he had believed his disciples were deluded men. He could see no connection between Jesus and the Messiah for whom the Jews were looking, and he had consecrated his life to the task of crushing out the movement which the impostor had inaugurated. But in the light of those experiences which he interpreted as God revealing his Son in him, he identified Jesus, whom the Christians were proclaiming as Lord, with the Messiah. He had no doubt about this identity, and he accepted it on the authority of a revelation. Paul believed the Christ whom he had thus come to know was his Lord and that all men owed him allegiance. He had no doubts about the Messiahship of Jesus or his claim upon his own life, for God had made it known to him through revelation.

Paul had come to believe that Jesus was living. There was no doubt in his mind concerning this, for he believed Christ had appeared

to him, and he accepted it as a fact on the authority of a revelation from God. This appearance was so real that he classed it along with the traditional appearances to the other apostles, and in regard to personal relationship with the risen Lord, he was not a whit behind the chiefest of the apostles.

When Paul came to believe in the resurrection of Jesus and in his Messiahship, he was led to the conviction that his death was a part of the divine plan, and that it was connected in some way with salvation. The death of Jesus was one of the main reasons why Paul was certain that he could not have been the Messiah. There was no place in his Jewish conception of the Messiah for suffering, and the thought of his dying at the hands of enemies was foreign to him. Instead of there being any possibility of his being overcome by his enemies and put to death, he was to be so great that he could destroy his enemies by the word of his mouth. Jesus of Nazareth was not only overcome by his enemies, but he was nailed in dishonor upon a cross. The Jews boasted of that fact, and the disciples had to admit it. That fact could have had but one significance for Saul, the Pharisee, and that was that Jesus had been made a curse. But when God revealed his Son in him, and he realized that the one who had died upon the cross was the Messiah, he then understood that his death must have a place in the divine plan. He felt that it was vitally connected with man's salvation. By his death on the cross Christ had been made a curse, but it was for man's sake. This must have dawned upon Paul suddenly, and it became fundamental in the development of his conception of the death of Christ, and he accepted it on the authority of a revelation.

Paul's conversion-experience convinced him that justification is through faith in Christ. He had formerly believed that justification was on the basis of law, and had earnestly tried to find victory on that basis, but he had failed. He was a wretched man, for he did the things that he ought not to have done, and failed to do the things which he should have done. But when God revealed his Son in him, and he realized that the one who had died upon a cross was God's Messiah and that his death was a part of the plan of God and was connected with man's salvation, he felt at once that man is justified through faith in Christ. This conception must have come to Paul like a flash out of heaven, but it was so real that it was authoritative for him. He was a changed man, and he referred to this change as though it had been sudden. Paul felt that a new force had entered into him which had completely transformed him. Old things had passed away and he looked

out upon a new world. He was as one who had died and had been raised to life again. Christ had suddenly laid hold upon him and had changed him from a persecutor into one of the persecuted. He had come into the kingdom as one abortively born, and at that time he had laid hold upon Christ by faith.

Paul believed he had been called to be an apostle by a revelation from God. The possession of his gospel was his call to preach it, and he declared that his gospel came through revelation. He said he did not receive it from man, nor was he taught it, "but it came through revelation of Jesus Christ." The conviction that Jesus is the Messiah and that a man is justified through faith in him constituted his gospel, and he believed that was made known to him by a revelation from heaven. Paul declared that he was "an apostle, not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father," and it is evident that he connected his call to be an apostle with those experiences which he interpreted as a revelation from God. Paul felt that his call was definite. Others might question it, but there were no doubts in his mind, for necessity had been laid upon him by his divine call.<sup>1</sup> Paul could designate his gospel as the gospel of God, because God had revealed it to him. He did not need apostolic sanction, for he had received his call from heaven, and it was so definite that he could not resist it, and persecutions could not stop him in his efforts to fulfill the mission to which the call had committed him.

Not only did Paul believe his apostolic claim had the authority of a revelation from heaven, but he also believed his apostleship to the Gentiles rested upon the same authority. He could say it was the good pleasure of God "to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the Gentiles" (Gal. 1:15, 16). When Paul became convinced that a man is justified by faith in Christ he realized that the gospel was for the Gentiles as well as for the Jews, and the revelation of that fact was his call to become Christ's ambassador to the Gentile world. The call was as imperative as if he had heard a voice shouting it from the skies. That conviction which came through the revelation of Christ was absolute and final.

#### b. Revelations and visions and ecstatic experiences.

Paul believed he was guided in important crises in his life by revelations, and these revelations, regardless of what we may consider them

<sup>1</sup> James H. Campbell (*Paul, the Mystic*, 1908, p. 60) says the proof that Paul possessed the authority to preach "did not consist in a parchment carried in the hand, but in the heart."

to have been, were interpreted as the voice of God directing him in the course in which he ought to go. When the Judaizers were causing trouble in the Pauline churches, Paul and Barnabas were directed by revelation to go to Jerusalem and secure the sanction of the leaders. Paul did not explain what the revelation was, but he was definite in his statement that it was a revelation which prompted him to go. He and the leaders at Antioch were troubled over the condition which resulted from the activity of the Judaizers. They were anxious about the course which they should pursue when Paul had a revelation in which he was directed to go to Jerusalem and lay the whole matter before the leaders. That experience was something that was very real to Paul, and he interpreted it as the voice of God commanding him to do what he would not otherwise have done. At the time of his conversion he purposely avoided the leaders at Jerusalem, and instead of going where he might have seen them, he went into Arabia. After three years he did go to Jerusalem to see Peter, but with the exception of James, he did not see any of the other leaders, and it is evident that he had not planned to visit James. What Paul meant to emphasize was that he did not seek a conference with the apostolic group. After fourteen years, however, he went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and the purpose of his going was to have a conference with the apostolic leaders to secure their sanction to the work he was doing. Paul's statement plainly indicates that his course on this occasion was different from what it would have been if he had followed his own inclinations, and the influence which caused him to act as he did was a revelation from God. That experience was very real to him. He believed that God had in some manner spoken to him, and he obeyed without any hesitation.

Paul not only believed God guided him in special crises by revelations, but he also believed there were times when the divine Spirit laid hold upon him, and lifted him out of himself, and caused him to do things which were not the result of his own initiative. He seems to have regarded these experiences as sacred, and he scarcely ever alluded to them, and when he did make reference to them he apologized for having done so. In one of his letters to the Corinthians he removed all barriers and boasted of what he had done and had endured for Christ's sake (See II Cor. 11:16-38). After he had boasted of what he had given up for the sake of his Master and of the persecutions through which he had passed, he said by way of apology: "I must needs glory, though it is not expedient" (II Cor. 12:1); then he came to what was to him the most sacred of all these experiences: "But I will come to visions

and revelations of the Lord." He mentioned but one of these visions, and he said it was not lawful to utter the unspeakable words which were revealed to him in that wonderful experience. The experience which he had in mind was so vivid that he remembered the exact time; it was fourteen years ago. He could not explain just what had happened to him at that time. God only knows whether he remained in the body or whether he was lifted out of it for the time being; but he knew that "he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words." While he did not state what the revelation was which was made to him at that time, he did intimate that it was exceeding great, and that under ordinary circumstances it would have puffed him up; but in order that he might not be exalted over much by reason of the "exceeding greatness of the revelation," there was given to him a thorn in the flesh. Regardless of what that thorn in the flesh may have been, it is evident that Paul connected it with the vision, and he regarded it as a messenger of Satan to buffet him.

Paul received special comfort and special assurance in times of severe trials. When Satan had buffeted him through the thorn in his flesh, he asked to have the thorn removed. It was not removed, but he heard the voice of God saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee" (II Cor. 12:9). Paul did not say how this voice came to him, but it must have been through some experience which was as real to him as if he had heard the uttered words.

Paul evidently regarded some of the spiritual gifts as the result of an immediate possession of the individual by the Spirit of God. His conviction was based upon his own experience, for he had seen these manifestations in others and he had experienced them in his own life. He urged the Corinthians not to forbid speaking in tongues, because that was a gift of the Spirit, and they would be resisting the Spirit if they forbade the expression of that which the Spirit prompted. Paul knew from his own experience that speaking with tongues was a gift of the Spirit, for he spake with tongues more than any of them. He felt that he possessed the Spirit of Christ to such a degree that he knew the divine will; hence he considered his instructions concerning speaking with tongues as the commandment of the Lord, and he did not permit others to pit their claims against the things he was writing.

Paul regarded the gift of prophecy as being a special manifestation of the divine Spirit. The message which the prophet gave when under the influence of the Spirit was regarded as a revelation from God. Paul taught that even prophets should be subject to the Spirit, and, if while

one prophet was speaking, a revelation should be made to another sitting by, the first must keep silence. The fact that the Spirit had begun to use another prophet was evident proof to Paul that God was through with the first; hence he should keep silence and give the Spirit the right of way.

Paul believed God had manifested himself to him in conversion and through visions and revelations and ecstatic experiences, and he regarded this expression of the divine will as authoritative. He believed God was manifesting himself to others in this immediate way, and he felt that this divine will should not be resisted.

### *The Experience of Conscience, or Moral Judgment*

Paul believed God was revealing himself to men through their consciences, and he regarded this expression of the divine will as authoritative, and he felt that men were without excuse if they violated it. Paul taught that the Gentiles, who do not have the revealed law of the Jews, do by nature the things of the law. He taught that they are "the law unto themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them" (Rom. 2:14, 15). Paul believed the sense of right and wrong which the Gentiles had was the result of a revelation of God to them through their consciences, and that this revelation was authoritative, and that they would be judged by it. According to Paul's thinking, the failure of the Gentiles was not due to the fact that they did not know the right, for God had placed the law of right in their hearts. Some of the Gentiles had lived up to this law, and their uncircumcision had become circumcision; but most of them had disregarded the law in their hearts, and as a result, they had lost the light which they had formerly possessed. They were responsible for their failure to live up to the law which God had revealed to them, and they would be judged accordingly.

Paul taught that Christians were to be guided in their conduct by the law of conscience. He told the Corinthians there was no harm in eating meat that had been sacrificed to idols, if there was no violation of conscience in what they did. He said an idol is nothing and the meat that had been offered in sacrifice to it was not different from ordinary meat; hence the only harm that could come to one in eating it would be in violating his conscience. That being true, he urged the Corinthians to eat whatever was sold in the shambles, and ask no questions for conscience' sake. He advised them, when in attendance

at a feast to which they had been bidden, to eat what was set before them and ask no questions for conscience' sake. He urged them to be true to conscience under all circumstances, and by not asking questions they would be relieved from conscientious scruples.

Paul taught that moral judgment, or the sense of right, was very important in determining duty. In defending his right to claim support from the churches where he was laboring, he appealed to the Christian's sense of right. He asked if he and Barnabas did not have the same rights in this respect as the other apostles had. To emphasize this sense of right he referred to the soldier who is paid for his service, and to the husbandman who eats the fruit of the vineyard which he plants, and to the shepherd who eats of the milk of the flock which he feeds. He implied that moral judgment should grant him the same rights that the soldier, or the husbandman, or the shepherd enjoys.

In attempting to prove to the Corinthians that a woman ought not to pray with her head unveiled, Paul appealed to their moral judgment, or to their sense of propriety. He asked if it was seemly to them for a woman to pray to God unveiled, and he implied by his question that a woman ought not to violate the moral sense of the community. Paul's own feelings played an important part in his argument. He had been accustomed to seeing modest women veiled, and for a woman to be unveiled seemed to him the same as if she were shaven. Paul appealed to the custom of the churches as an expression of this moral judgment. The fact that there was no custom in the churches of God of a woman praying or prophesying unveiled ought, he believed, to prevent any woman from attempting it; and he argued that if she should attempt it, she would be going contrary to the moral sense, not only of that community, but of the whole church.

In his effort to get the Corinthians to exclude the fornicator, Paul appealed to their moral judgment. He told them the fornication that was reported in Corinth was of such a character that it would not be found even among the non-Christian Gentiles. The moral judgment, not merely of the Corinthian Christians, but of the pagan Gentiles as well, would condemn the man. In rebuking the Corinthians for retaining the fornicator in their fellowship and for glorying in what they were doing, Paul appealed to their moral sense. He asked them if they did not know that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. He asked if they were not aware of the fact that this one man would contaminate the whole church, and that being true, they should purge themselves

from the dangerous leaven. Paul regarded the moral sense as authoritative, and he urged the Corinthians to act in accordance with it.

In urging the Corinthians to give for the support of the poor at Jerusalem, Paul appealed to their sense of duty. He referred to the gifts of the Macedonian churches, and called attention to the fact that they had given beyond their ability, and the explanation of their liberality was that they had first given themselves to the Lord. While Paul did not state it in so many words, he evidently meant to imply that the Corinthians would give to the Lord's poor, if they gave themselves to the Lord, for their sense of right would then demand it. The giving would be proof of the sincerity of their love. Paul commended the Corinthians for having planned to give, and he urged them to complete what they had begun. He appealed to their sense of right in urging them to give as they had been prospered.

Paul regarded conscience, or the moral judgment, as the means by which the divine will was revealed, and the revelation of the divine will was always authoritative for him. He believed God was leading men through these inner impulses, and to refuse to obey these inner promptings was to quench the Spirit. Paul did not seek to dominate the faith of men, but he sought to commend the truth he was teaching to "every man's conscience in the sight of God" (II Cor. 4:2). He told the Corinthians he was speaking to wise men, and he asked them to use their judgment in determining the truthfulness of what he was saying (I Cor. 10:15).

#### *The Experience of his Normal Convictions*

Paul believed his convictions were expressions of the will of the Spirit, and the will of the Spirit was always authoritative for him. He believed his convictions could be relied upon because they were the result of the Spirit's activity. This is illustrated by his teaching concerning marriage. His advice had been sought concerning the marriage of virgins. There was no custom of the churches that could serve as a guide in the advice he should give, and he did not know of any commandment of the Lord that had any bearing on the situation; but he did have a conviction on the subject, and he gave this as his judgment, and he believed he had "obtained mercy of the Lord to be trustworthy." Conscience could not serve as a guide in settling this question, for there would be no harm in marrying. In fact it was Paul's judgment that if a man did not have the gift of continency he had better marry. But he had the conviction that because of the dis-

tress of the times, and because of the nearness of the Parousia, it was better for both men and women to remain unmarried. He had the conviction that a woman would be happier if she remained unmarried, and she could then give herself wholly to the service of the Lord, and he believed the Spirit of God led him to that conviction.

Paul gave it as his conviction that it was better for one who had become a Christian to remain with the pagan companion, providing the pagan companion was willing to continue in marital relationship. He did not give that advice as a command, but he stated it as his judgment, and in such an emphatic manner that it is evident that he felt he was expressing the will of God on the subject. Paul felt it was better for a Christian to remain in the state in which he was when he was called into Christ's service, and there could be no objection to a Christian remaining with a heathen companion, for the Christian member would sanctify the union.

Paul's advice to the slave not to seek liberty was undoubtedly the expression of a general conviction which he had on the subject. It would not be wrong for one to be a slave, and it would not be wrong for one to be a free man, but because of the shortness of the time, Paul had the feeling that it would be better for a man to remain as he was when he became a Christian. He undoubtedly felt that he was expressing the will of God when he advised the Christian who is free not to seek bondage, and the Christian who is in bondage not to seek freedom.

### *The Experience Resulting from the Practise of Religion*

#### a. As illustrated by his own experience.

A careful study of Paul's writings demonstrates the fact that he regarded the experience resulting from the practical working out of religion as a means by which the divine revelation was made known. He believed God was leading men in the ordinary experiences of life. He was conscious that God was leading him in ways which he could not at the time understand. He was frequently led to do things by circumstances which at the time baffled him, but which he afterward interpreted as the guidance of the divine Spirit. He wanted to tarry for a time in Corinth, if the Lord would permit him to do so, and he prayed that he might be prospered by the will of God to come to Rome. He interpreted the circumstances which made it possible or impossible for him to do certain things as the leading of God.

While Paul's own personal experience influenced him in the development of his conception of the relation between the flesh and the spirit,

he undoubtedly believed his conviction was a revelation from God. He had understood what it meant to struggle against the desires of the flesh. He realized that even for the Christian the flesh is antagonistic to the spirit and is constantly warring against it. He realized from his own experience that unless the Christian conquered the flesh it would conquer him and prevent him from doing what he would (Gal. 5:16, 17). He knew that the struggle of the flesh against the spirit was so keen that he had to buffet his body and bring it into subjection, lest after he had preached to others, he should be a castaway (I Cor. 9:27). Paul must have been convinced from his own experience that sin dwelt in his members, but his own experience must also have convinced him that sin could be dethroned and the members of his body could be made instruments of righteousness. It was undoubtedly his own experience which convinced him that sin may be banished and Jesus may be manifested in our own mortal flesh (II Cor. 4:11). Paul believed the body belongs to God, and his own experience convinced him that it can be made a fit dwelling place for the divine Spirit. He knew from his observation of others that the Spirit of Christ was working out the same things in them, for he could see, as the fruits of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, etc." It is not at all probable that Paul believed his convictions concerning the relation of the flesh to sin were the result of experience. He believed that God had made these truths known to him, and hence they had the authority of a revelation.

Although Paul did not realize that it was his own experience which had guided him in the development of his idea of justification, yet that was undoubtedly the most important influence. He knew that justification on the basis of law was a failure, for he had given it a thorough test and he had miserably failed. He delighted in the law of God after the inward man, but he found that there was a different law in his members warring against the law of his mind. His inner self consented to the law that it was good and agreed that he ought to keep it, but his own experience had convinced him that there was nothing in the law to give him strength and inspiration to do the things which he knew he ought to do. He was a wretched man, for he knew what he ought to do, but he was brought into captivity under the law of sin which was in his members so that he did not do it. Paul's attitude towards the law was the result of experience. He did not impose it upon the Gentiles, and he strenuously resisted any attempt of the Judaizers to unnecessarily hamper them, because he felt the law had been a burden to him rather than a help. His Christian experience

had completely changed his estimate of the law as a means of justification. The law had failed to help him directly, but it had convinced him of his need and thus served as a pedagogue to bring him to Christ. Inasmuch as it had failed to help him, he believed it was unnecessary for the Gentiles. Paul knew from his own experience that one is justified through faith in Christ, for he had tried it and had succeeded gloriously. He knew that one who is justified by faith has peace with God, for he had experienced that peace in his own soul. He knew that one who is justified by faith has before him such a strong hope of the glory of God that he rejoices even in his tribulations, and he knew this because he had passed through these tribulations and had rejoiced in them. Paul knew that one who is justified by faith is dead to sin, for he had passed through that death himself. He knew that one who is justified by faith is freed from the law, for he had experienced this liberty; and yet his own experience had taught him that the Christian is under a more exacting law, the law of the Spirit of Christ Jesus. Paul knew that the one who is justified by faith has triumphed over death, for he had once feared death; but since he had come to know Christ it had lost its terrors, and instead of shrinking from it, he now longed to depart and be with Christ. He knew from experience that death cannot touch the spirit of the one in whom Christ abides. While we interpret the development of Paul's thought on the basis of experience, it is not at all probable that he would have explained it in that way. He believed the doctrine of justification by faith had the authority of revelation, as God had made this known to him through his Spirit.

Paul's notion of the new life was largely the result of experience. He spoke with conviction about the Christian's relation to Christ, because he was speaking out of his own personal experience. He must have realized, when he looked back over his life, that he had passed through a wonderful transformation, and that this was the result of his relation to Christ. He knew that the one who is in Christ is a new creature, for this fact had been demonstrated in his own life. He knew it was possible for one's life to be dominated and controlled by the Spirit of Christ, for he had put it to the test. Christ was such a dominant factor in his life that he could say Christ was living within him. Paul believed it is through faith that Christ enters into one's life and takes possession of him, and he believed this because it was through faith that he had come into such close touch with the Master that he was living within him. Paul believed it was possible for others to know Christ as he had come to know him, hence his experience was made a

norm for all. He knew that Christ had been formed in him, and he was anxious that he should be formed in others. Paul knew that he had the leading of the divine Spirit, and he was anxious that others should follow the same leading. The ground of certainty for Paul was his knowledge of the living Christ, and he believed every man should have this assurance. He told the Corinthians to examine themselves whether they were in the faith (II Cor 13:5). Paul knew that the Spirit gave him confidence and assurance and enabled him to cry, "Abba, Father," and he wanted others to have this same confidence. He knew that the Spirit helped him in his infirmity, and made intercession for him, and he was anxious that others should avail themselves of this same help.

Paul did not definitely distinguish between the indwelling Christ and the indwelling Spirit, and the reason was that from the point of view of experience they were practically the same.<sup>2</sup> Paul was more concerned about what the Holy Spirit does than he was about what the Holy Spirit is. For Paul the Spirit was the divine energy that was manifested within him. He thought according to the Spirit, and he walked according to the Spirit, and he believed he and all the others who yielded themselves to the divine energy were spiritual men.

Paul believed all Christians were guided by the Spirit of God. He did not think he was the only one who had the Spirit of God. He was merely the helper of the faith of others, and he wanted them to follow the leading of the Spirit within. He did consider his inner experiences as being authoritative, and some of these experiences were regarded as being of peculiar value. His experience was the medium through which God was revealing his great truths, and these truths were proclaimed as the gospel of God, and anathemas were hurled against any who should proclaim another gospel.

In addition to these inner experiences there were those that were connected with his missionary activities, and he regarded these also as indications that the Spirit was sanctioning what he was doing. Paul believed truth was verified by its results. The success of a movement demonstrates that it has divine approval. While Paul based his claim to apostleship on his inner experience, he appealed to the success of his work as a proof of his claim. It was on this ground that he endeavored to get the leaders of the church at Jerusalem to sanction his work, and it was the fact that God was working mightily in Paul toward the Gentiles that induced these leaders to give him the right hand of fellowship

<sup>2</sup> Auguste Sabatier (*Les Religions D' Autorite Et La Religion De L' Esprit*, pp. 473 f.; Eng. trans., 1904, p. 307) says: "To believe in Christ, to be in Christ, the life of Christ in us, and to receive the Spirit are synonymous terms."

(Gal 2:8, 9). In his letter to the Corinthians Paul urged that they should regard him as an apostle, because he had done among them the work of an apostle. He told them they were the seal of his apostleship. He assured the Corinthians that the works of an apostle had been done by him in their midst through signs and wonders and mighty works. He assured them that, when judged by his labors, he was not behind the chiefest of the apostles.

b. As illustrated by the experience of others.

In seeking to establish the Galatians in the doctrine of justification by faith, Paul appealed to their own experience as convincing proof that they had the Spirit and could trust its authority. He asked them whether they received the Spirit by works of law, or by the hearing of faith. His question would imply that it was by the hearing of faith that they had received the Spirit, and that being true, their experience ought to convince them that justification is on the basis of faith. He appealed to their experience again when he asked whether the one who ministered to them the Spirit and worked miracles among them did it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith. These Galatians knew from experience that it was by faith that they had received the Spirit and were able to perform miracles, and Paul insisted that this experience should convince them that they had the Spirit and that it could be trusted as an authoritative guide.

In his controversy with Peter at Antioch, Paul appealed to their common experience. When Peter separated himself from the Gentile element in the church on account of those who had come from James, he was virtually saying that the Gentiles were not as good as the Jews, because they had not kept the Jewish rites. Peter, by his actions, was virtually saying to the Gentile Christians, we who are Jewish Christians are better than you, and we cannot fellowship you unless you keep the Jewish law. In rebuking Peter, Paul appealed to their common experience. He said, We, who are Jews by nature, know "that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but only through faith in Jesus Christ." Paul evidently meant to imply that they had found that out in their own experience, and his conclusion was that inasmuch as the law had not helped them they should not try to bind it on the Gentiles. Paul regarded their experience as a proof of the Spirit's presence, and inasmuch as the Spirit is authoritative, he believed their experience could be trusted as indicating the Spirit's will for the whole Gentile world. He estimated the law as a means of justification by its workings. It had failed to help him and Peter, and he insisted that it should not be fastened upon the Gentiles.

*Experience Resulting from Reason*

One of the most vital phases of the experience of a great soul like Paul is the conclusions to which he has come through a process of reasoning. The elements which enter into this reasoning process are varied, and they help to determine the results which are reached; but the whole process becomes a vital part of experience. The breadth and keenness of Paul's mind made this part of his experience significant for Christianity. Paul felt that the Spirit of God guided him in reaching his conclusions, and as the Spirit of God is authoritative, these conclusions could be accepted as correct.

There was nothing in Paul's religious thinking that was more fundamental than the death of Christ, and his thought about the significance of Christ's death was to a large extent the result of a process of reasoning. His conclusions were so vital to him that they were accepted as the revelation of the Spirit, and they were presented to the church on the basis of that authority. His reasoning was based on truths which he had experienced, and his conclusions then created new experiences. Christ's death was for man's salvation. His death on the cross was a curse, but he was made a curse for others. On the divine side, Christ's death enabled God to show himself to have been just in passing over sin, and at the same to be the justifier of those who have faith in Christ. On the human side, Christ in his death fulfilled the law and removed it, and thus enabled a man to become united to him. Paul's mysticism made it natural for him to feel that man died with Christ on the cross and was raised with him. Paul undoubtedly reached these conclusions through a process of reasoning which he interpreted as the leading of the divine Spirit. He knew he had the mind of Christ and he believed his statement could be accepted as trustworthy. His conclusions which were the result of a process of reasoning became vital in his experience, and they were presented to the church with as much certainty as any other part of his teachings.

Paul's conception of the purpose of the law could only result from a process of reasoning, and yet his conclusions were so true to experience that they were as authoritative for him as if they had come through revelation, and he undoubtedly felt that he had been guided by the Spirit in reaching these conclusions. The law was the greatest heritage which Judaism possessed, and yet it could not justify. It was divinely given, and it must have had some purpose in the great divine plan.

On the basis of his own experience, Paul concluded the purpose of the law was to show man his own helplessness and his need of divine mercy. He argued that the law, by showing to man his inability to keep it, had shut him up under sin and had thus become a tutor to bring him to Christ. This conviction which Paul reached through a process of reasoning was a complete reversal of his former conception of the purpose of the law, and it was presented in Galatians and Romans as an authoritative interpretation for others.

One of the most striking illustrations of the certainty of the conclusions which he reached through reason is in connection with the rejection of Israel. There is no teaching in Paul's writings that is given more emphatically than the rejection of Israel, and the purpose which God was seeking to accomplish through this rejection; and these conclusions must have been the result of reason, based on certain facts which were a part of his experience. Paul's conversion convinced him that God guides the destiny of man; that he separates him from his mother's womb, and calls him into his service. Paul was convinced that he was a Christian, not because of any initiative on his part, but because God had laid hold upon him. He did not think of his own conversion as being peculiar. He was saved because of the grace of God, and others were saved for the same reason. Just a few of the great mass of the people who heard the gospel had accepted it, and the explanation of this was, not that the gospel had not been faithfully preached but that God had been calling whom he would. Most of the Christian converts in Corinth, and in other cities as well, were from the poor and uncultured classes; but this was for Paul, not an indication of the weakness of the gospel, but of the choice God was making. He was choosing the weak things of the world that he might put to shame the things that are strong. The eagerness of the Thessalonians to accept the gospel was a proof of their election. The gospel came to them in power because God had elected them to salvation.

One of the most discouraging obstacles which Paul had to overcome in his missionary activities was the rejection of the gospel by the Jews. He was confronted by the fact that in every community the Gentiles accepted his message while the Jews rejected it. It was a great disappointment to Paul that his own countrymen did not accept the gospel, but he knew the fault was not his, for he would have been willing to have been cursed for their sakes. They were not accepting the gospel, because God was rejecting them; and it was because God was choosing the Gentiles that they were accepting the gospel.

Paul argued that God was working out a great plan in what he was doing, and his plan was the winning of both Jews and Gentiles so that all should be saved. The reasoning which led him to this conclusion was based upon his own observations. Although the Jews were rejecting the gospel, the Gentiles in large numbers were accepting it, and he had seen the zeal of these Gentiles win Jewish converts, and he had also seen the barriers which separated Jews and Gentiles removed. He concluded that what had happened on a small scale under his observation, God was directing, and he believed that what God had accomplished in a small way, he would ultimately make universal. Paul undoubtedly felt that the Spirit of God had guided him in reaching his conclusions, and he presented these to the church with absolute certainty.

Paul's conviction concerning the institutions of his day was the result of reason, based upon conditions as he saw them. His advice to the Christian concerning his relation to slavery was the result of careful thinking on the subject in the light of the Christian life as he had understood it and experienced it. He believed his conclusions were final, and he felt he had a right to command even though he simply advised. His conviction was that a Christian master should treat his servant as a brother, for he is that in reality, and the law of love would make it impossible for him to do otherwise. The Christian servant should not seek to be free, for the time is short, and he is Christ's free man even though he be a bond-servant.

Paul admonished Christians to be obedient to the state and to help to support it by paying tribute and custom. His conclusion was the result of his thinking over the situation with the conditions in the Roman world, as he had seen them, in mind. When he saw how Roman domination had brought peace throughout the Mediterranean world, and how this had made it possible for the missionaries to carry on their work, he concluded that the civil power is ordained of God. When he saw how Roman officials punished offenders and restrained evil-doers, he concluded that civil rulers are ministers of God for good. Paul did not merely express it as his opinion that the state is of God, and that rulers are God's ministers, and hence Christians ought to obey them; he stated it as a fact and commanded obedience. He was absolutely certain about his conclusions, and he undoubtedly felt that he had the leading of the divine spirit in arriving at these convictions.

#### THE RELATION OF EXPERIENCE TO HIS JEWISH INHERITANCE

Paul had been a devout Jew before he became a Christian. He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees. He had been trained in the rabbinical

schools, and he was familiar with the Jewish thought of his day. He was well acquainted with the extra-canonical writings of the Jews, and with their oral traditions. His thinking before he became a Christian moved along the lines of current Judaism, and much that was peculiar to current Judaism remained as a part of his Christian thinking. Much of Paul's thought was in no particular sense his own, for his previous training exerted a tremendous influence on his thinking as a Christian. He said the revelation of Christ in him had made him a new creature, but this was only partially true, for much of Judaism was carried over into his Christian experience. There was a sense in which Paul remained a Jew even after he became a Christian. He regarded himself as a "Hebrew" (II Cor. 11:22; Phil. 3:5), and an "Israelite" (II Cor. 11:22; Rom. 11:1), and of the "seed of Abraham." He thought of himself as belonging to "the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16), and he referred to the Jews in the wilderness as "our fathers" (I Cor. 10:1). He boasted of the fact that he was of the seed of Abraham and belonged to the tribe of Benjamin (Rom. 11:1), and that he was circumcised on the eighth day (Phil. 3:5).

In discussing the relation of experience to Paul's Jewish inheritance, it will be most convenient to arrange it under two heads—the relation of his experience to current Judaism, and the relation of his experience to the Old Testament.

#### *Current Judaism*

The term "current Judaism" is meant to include the thought of the Jewish world of which Paul was a part. After he became a Christian he had to readjust all the religious thinking of his past life, and if we have made a correct interpretation of Paul, the standard according to which he judged everything was his new experience, and this he interpreted as a revelation from God. He believed he was guided by the Spirit in making this readjustment.

##### a. Elements inherited from Judaism which were but slightly changed.

In making a study of Paul's Christian thought, one must be impressed with the fact that much of it was brought over from current Judaism, and that these Jewish ideas continued, with but few modifications, a part of his Christian thinking. There are many things in the writings of Paul which indicate that he still venerated the religion of his fathers. In proving his right as an apostle to claim support, he cited a couple of well-known incidents from the religion of Judaism. He referred

to the one who ministers in the temple eating of the things of the temple, and also to those who wait upon the altar having their portion with the altar; and the use which he made of these illustrations indicates that because they were taken from the Jewish religion he attached special importance to them.

Paul's conception of the universe as being like the different stories of a building was Jewish. His idea of Satan and of evil spirits was in harmony with the Jewish thought of his time. When he mentioned any of these subjects he simply expressed the thought which he had inherited from the past. Paul had lived in a world that was supposed to be inhabited by evil spirits, and he had naturally accepted that belief, and this conviction gave these evil spirits a place in his experience.

Paul's conception of God's relation to the universe was to a large extent that of current Judaism. Paul had been a firm believer in God before he became a Christian, and any modifications in his thought of God which came as a result of his Christian experience seem to have been unconscious to himself, as there is no indication in any of his writings that he was criticising the Jewish conception of God, or that he was calling in question incorrect ideas which he had before his conversion. It was believed in later Judaism that God acted upon the world through intermediaries, and angels were included among these. Paul retained angels in his Christian thinking, but they did not occupy a very vital place. According to the Old Testament account,<sup>3</sup> Jehovah gave the law to the people, but Paul said: "The law was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator" (Gal. 3:19). The tradition that the law was given through angels fitted in well with the conception that was current in later Judaism that God acted upon the world through intermediaries. That tradition found expression in the Book of Jubilees, and it was a part of Paul's pre-Christian thinking and it continued to represent his thought after his conversion.

Paul, when he was a Pharisee, must have regarded some of the extra-canonical Jewish writings as belonging with the Old Testament Scriptures, and he must have retained that attitude after he became a Christian. The quotation, "Eye hath not seen, etc." is introduced with the formula, "As it is written," and this quotation is not found in any of the Old Testament books; but according to several of the Church Fathers it did occur in an "Apocalypse of Elijah."

#### b. Elements inherited from Judaism that were vitally changed.

A careful study of Paul's writings reveals the fact that while many elements that were inherited from Judaism remained unaltered in his

<sup>3</sup> See Ex. chap. 20; Deut. chap. 5.

Christian thinking, there were others that were modified, or completely changed. The standard by which he determined his beliefs was his Christian experience, and this he interpreted as the mind of Christ. He modified his inherited beliefs when they did not agree with what he was convinced the Spirit had revealed to him. When there was no conflict between his inherited beliefs and his Christian experience, or the revelation of the Spirit, there was no vital change in his thought; but when his Jewish beliefs were contradicted by experience, they were changed, and a Christian content was put into them.

As indicated above, Paul was perhaps unconscious of the fact that his conception of God had undergone a change under the influence of his Christian experiences, but it had been very much modified. His own conversion and his missionary labors strengthened his belief in the divine sovereignty. In the light of his Christian experience Paul was led to believe that God was not a mere legalist, dealing with men on the basis of law, but that he so loved men that he delivered up his Son on their behalf and was constraining them by the power of his love. Through the influence of the divine Spirit which he had received, he was led to feel that God is near and that he is Father. Because of his contact with the Gentile world, he became convinced that God is interested in the Gentiles as well as the Jews, and that he had been seeking to make himself known to them.

Because of his Christian experience, Paul's conception of the Messiah, which he inherited from Judaism, was entirely changed. Instead of thinking of him as a national deliverer, he had come to regard him as the world's savior. Instead of believing that he could not suffer, the death on the cross had become fundamental in his thinking. Paul's conversion-experience, which was regarded as a revelation of Christ, became the standard according to which old ideas were readjusted; and in the light of that wonderful experience, the very ideas which had formerly made him feel that Jesus was an impostor, and not the Messiah, were now felt to be fundamental in his Messianic work. In the light of this experience he could say, he had once known the Messiah after the flesh, but he had now come to know an entirely different Messiah.

Paul's eschatology was Jewish, but he transferred to the second coming of Christ the things which the Jews expected their Messiah to do. Paul's experience led him to place more emphasis on the practical phases of eschatology, hence many of the details which are so conspicuous in Jewish apocalypses are not found in his writings.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>H. A. A. Kennedy (*St. Paul's Conception of Last Things*, 1904, p. 174) says: "The circle of events which St. Paul groups around the Parousia are no mechanical

Paul's Christian experience led him to completely reverse his estimate of the law. It had once been the chief object of his glory, and was regarded as the means by which a man is justified and made holy, but in the light of his Christian experience, it was regarded as a curse from which Christ by his death delivered men. Instead of the law being regarded as a help to man, Paul had come to think of it as shutting man up under sin, and thus showing him his helplessness and his need of divine mercy.

Paul's Christian experience absolutely reversed his notion of God's attitude toward the Jew and the Gentile. He had formerly regarded the Gentiles as accursed of God, because they did not know the law and consequently could not keep it; but experience had convinced him that the Gentiles, who did not have the revealed law, were doing by nature the things of the law. He had formerly believed that the Jews were God's chosen people, and that the only hope for the Gentiles was in becoming Jewish proselytes; but his experience had convinced him that God was rejecting the Jews and was choosing the Gentiles for the working out of his plan, and the reason he was doing this was that the Gentiles were more acceptable to God than were the Jews.

Paul's experience before and after his conversion had given him a different impression of the Roman Empire from what was ordinarily held by the Jews. Instead of regarding it as an instrument used by God for the purpose of punishing his disobedient children, or as an agency, which is evil in itself, but which God uses to carry out his plan, experience had convinced Paul that the Roman Empire was ordained of God, and that the Roman officials were God's ministers, and even their punishments were divinely ordained to restrain evil-doers.

### *The Old Testament*

Paul's Jewish training had familiarized him with the Old Testament Scriptures, and his thinking was determined by Old Testament doctrines and ideals, and it would be natural for these to hold a prominent place in his Christian thinking. It seems evident from a study of his writings, that his Christian experience was the standard by which he estimated even the Old Testament, and he believed he was being guided by the Spirit of God in what he was doing. When experience had convinced him that a certain thing was true, he went back to the

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reproductions of current Judaistic ideas, but take all their color from his own experience of the risen Lord."

Old Testament to find statements to prove it. He sometimes used the Scriptures in a manner which, from our point of view, cannot be justified, but which was perfectly natural to him. His rabbinical method of interpretation enabled him to read back into the Scriptures what he wanted to find. A brief summary of Paul's use of the Old Testament, as it is brought out in the preceding chapters of this treatise, will demonstrate the fact that although he quoted the Scriptures as authoritative, there was for him an authority which was more binding than the Scriptures.

a. Paul's use of the Old Testament.

Paul designated the Old Testament as "the oracles of God" (Rom. 3:2), and he believed it was a divine revelation of God's plan and purpose (I Cor. 15:4; Gal. 3:8). He received his fundamental ideas of religion from the Old Testament, and he used it as Scripture on all occasions.

Paul used Old Testament language to emphasize his point, without citing it as from the Old Testament, and regardless of the connection in which this language is found. Sometimes the sense in which he used this language, taken from the Old Testament, corresponds with the original meaning, and sometimes he gave it a significance which is very different from what was intended by the original writer.

Paul frequently used the Old Testament as illustration material. The sense in which he used it was sometimes true to the original context, and he sometimes did violence to the historical meaning of the passage. Historical incidents were used as though they were intended to be types, and had been written, not for historical purposes, but for admonition to future ages. Historical passages were treated as allegories, and a spiritual meaning which a passage did not contain was read into it. The incident of the ox treading out the corn, which in its original connection was a law for the protection of animals, was used by Paul as an argument to prove that apostles should be supported. He said it was not for the oxen that God cared, but he was thinking of those who should preach the gospel, and he was providing for their support. Paul used the Scriptures very freely in the case of the bond woman and the free woman. He read his doctrine back into the historical incident, and he felt free to use it in a manner that would accomplish his purpose. He did not feel that he was obligated to correctly represent the historical incident in all its details, for it was the children of Sarah, rather than the children of Hagar, that were really in bondage to the law.

Paul made many quotations from the Old Testament in support of moral principles which he was seeking to enforce, and of spiritual ideals which he was holding up before Christians, and in most of these quotations he was true to the original meaning of the passage. In proving his doctrines he usually made one or more quotations from the Scriptures, and ordinarily he correctly interpreted the passages used. His rabbinical method of interpretation, however, enabled him to use these passages very freely, and he sometimes changed their meaning absolutely. Passages which were not Messianic were used in a Messianic sense. Passages which did not originally have any connection with the Gentiles were used to prove the calling of the Gentiles. He used the Old Testament account of the covenant with Abraham to prove his doctrine of justification by faith. He was able to do that, because in the Genesis account of the first promise to Abraham of descendants, it is said: "And he believed in Jehovah; and he reckoned it to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6). This passage, however, does not refer to the covenant with Abraham. This is found in Genesis 17:9-14, and circumcision is the requirement for one who would be included under the covenant. By the act of circumcision one entered into covenant relation with God, and the uncircumcised person was to be cut off from his people. Paul, by a rabbinical method of interpretation, sought to prove that faith and not circumcision, was the basis of the covenant with Abraham. Because the promise was made to Abraham before he had been circumcised, Paul argued that he was justified by faith. That being true, it is those who have faith, rather than those who have been circumcised, that are the real children of Abraham. In this interpretation, Paul was not seeking to find out the real meaning of the Old Testament; he was using it to prove his doctrine, and in doing this, he read back into it what he wanted to find.

In his effort to prove that the promise was not made to the lineal descendants of Abraham, Paul reached the climax of his rabbinical method of interpreting Scripture. The promise was to Abraham and his seed, and Paul argued that, as seed is singular, it is evident that it refers, not to many, but to one, which is Christ. The Genesis passage which Paul had in mind, referred to peoples, and not to the Messiah, and in Rom. 4:18, he made it refer to nations, although he had stated in his letter to the Galatians that it could not have this meaning.

In his argument in the tenth chapter of Romans, Paul used, for the purpose of condemning the law, statements which in their original connection exalt the law. He sought to liberate the Jews from the law

and unite them to Christ by quoting passages which were intended to bind them to the law, and to accomplish his purpose, he substituted faith where law is used in the Old Testament passage.

It is very evident that Paul used the Old Testament to prove the convictions to which he had been led through experience. Sometimes he found passages that were suited to his purpose, and sometimes by rabbinical methods of interpretation he read into the Old Testament the idea which he wanted to use.<sup>5</sup> Paul was probably unconscious of the fact that he was doing violence to the Scriptures, and he must have felt that he was being led by the Spirit in the interpretations which he made

b. Paul's estimate of the Old Testament.

In discussing what the Old Testament meant to Paul, it is impossible to speak with absolute certainty. There are several possibilities, and it is easy to find statements in his writings to substantiate any one of them.

(a) Of no authoritative value for the Christian.

There is a possibility that Paul may have regarded the Old Testament Scriptures as being of no value for the Christian, except as they show how God was preparing the way for Christ. In defending the doctrine of justification by faith in Christ, he did say that Christ had taken the law out of the way. It is true, Paul used the law in different senses. He sometimes used it as the Mosaic code; and he sometimes used it as the whole Old Testament system; and he sometimes used it as the sense of right which is written in the heart. It is not probable that Paul was thinking merely of the Mosaic code when he said Christ had freed men from the law, or that he meant to separate the ceremonial law from the moral law. It seems that he was thinking of the whole Old Testament system. But Paul could not have felt that the law of Moses had no value for Christians, for he frequently quoted it as authoritative to prove his arguments.

(b) Of absolute authority for Christians.

There is a possibility that Paul may have regarded the Old Testament Scripture as being of absolute authority for Christians. He

<sup>5</sup> A. Sabatier (*L' Apôtre Paul*, 1896, p. 74; Eng. trans., 1906, p. 87) says: 'It was not from the Old Testament, not by way exegesis, that the apostle obtained the ground on which his doctrine rests. If his faith depends on his exegesis, his exegesis depends still more on his faith. His convictions are not the result of his bold method of interpretation; that method can only be explained by the new convictions, which of necessity gave rise to it.'

undoubtedly read the Scriptures privately, and encouraged other Christians to read them. He undoubtedly read them in the churches, and encouraged other churches to read them. He was constantly quoting from the Old Testament in his writings, and he reached the climax in many an argument with a "thus saith the law," and when he used that expression, he did it in such a manner that it indicated that he meant it to be authoritative. But there are many things in the writings of Paul which make it evident that while he regarded the Old Testament as authoritative for him and for others, there was in reality another authority which was more vital than the Old Testament.

(c) Two conflicting theories of the Old Testament.

There is a possibility that Paul may have had two conflicting theories in regard to the Old Testament Scriptures, one inherited from the past, and the other the result of Christian experience, and that he did not realize the conflict between them. As a result of the feelings which he inherited from Judaism, he regarded the Scriptures as having been inspired of God, and hence authoritative; but his experience had convinced him that the Christian is living under a higher law, the guidance of the Spirit. The one who is united to Christ by faith is freed from the law, and the law no longer has dominion over him. He is to follow the leading of faith and love. The love of Christ is to be the constraining power in his life, and he is to do the things to which love leads him. The law of brotherly love is to guide him in his attitude toward others, and this love will lead him to fulfill the whole law. Under the influence of his experience Paul urged Christians to follow the leading of the Spirit and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit in their lives; and under the influence of his Jewish inheritance, from which he was never entirely free, he quoted the Scriptures as authoritative and urged Christians to heed their admonitions.

(d) Not the basis of justification, but spiritual, and prophetically authoritative.

There is a possibility that Paul may have felt that the law, or the Old Testament system, was not the basis of justification, but that it contained a spiritual or prophetical message which was valuable for all time, and which was of special value for his own day. This theory seems to best solve all the problems and meet all the conditions connected with Paul's use of the Old Testament. Paul regarded the law and the gospel as being parts of the divine plan, and he felt there was a spiritual content in the law which the Jews had missed; hence the gospel was the completion of this spiritual message which was not com-

prehended by the Jews. God had intended that justification during the Old Testament dispensation should be by faith, but the Jews had sought a righteousness of their own on the basis of law, and God was displeased with them. Believing the law had a spiritual content, which the gospel fulfilled, he could use it to substantiate the gospel truths. Paul felt that the things which were happening in his own day were prefigured in the Scriptures, and he believed the things that were written in the Scriptures were for the Christian's admonition.<sup>6</sup>

In his attempt to make the Old Testament support his Christian experience, Paul may have deliberately changed the meaning of the Old Testament. He may have been conscious of the fact that he was reading his own thought back into it, and that he was changing its original meaning when he did this. That, however, does not seem probable, as he would have known that there would be objection to his method and that his argument would be weakened rather than strengthened.

It is very probable that Paul unconsciously changed the meaning of the Old Testament to make it substantiate the truths to which his Christian experience had led him. Although he believed Christ had freed men from the law and had placed them under the guidance of the Spirit, yet he spiritualized the law, and by means of rabbinical methods of interpretation, he read back into it what he wanted to find and used it as authoritative. Paul's religion was not based upon the Old Testament. God did not speak to him out of a book; but he spoke to him through his Spirit. And yet, inasmuch as Christianity was the fulfillment of the Old Testament, the Old Testament itself could be used as proof of the message of the Spirit.

#### THE RELATION OF EXPERIENCE TO THE LIFE AND THOUGHT OF THE MEDITERRANEAN WORLD

It was significant that Paul was born in Tarsus, which was one of the most cosmopolitan cities of the Mediterranean world.<sup>7</sup> Not only

<sup>6</sup> A. Sabatier (*The Apostle Paul*, 1906, pp. 86 ff.) was not far from Paul's position when he said: "If the Old Covenant ceased to exist as an economy of salvation, it became all the more important as a preparation and a prophecy. . . . He may be said to have read the Old Testament books with the eyes of a Christian and the penetration of a rabbi. Everything in this long history of God's people became prophecy; its personages and events equally so with its discourses. Its language became transfigured; the spiritual meaning shone forth through the veil of the literal sense."

<sup>7</sup> Adolf Deissmann (*Paulus, eine Kultur und religionsgeschichtliche Skizze*, 1911, pp. 23 f.; Eng. trans., 1912, p. 35) says: "The apostle of the nations comes from a classical seat of international intercourse, and his home itself was to him from childhood a microcosmos, in which the forces of the great ancient cosmos of the Mediterranean world were all represented."

did Paul spend his early life in Tarus, but he probably made that city the center of his missionary activities in Syria and Cilicia. It would have been impossible for him to have lived in contact with this cosmopolitan world, either as a Jew or as a Christian, and not be influenced by it. Paul's missionary activities kept him in close touch with this world where all sorts of religious and philosophic ideas were mingling. His citizenship and the public life he was living brought him into vital touch with the Empire, and he must have been familiar with the Emperor-Cult and with these other religions and philosophies which helped to constitute the life and thought of the Mediterranean world, which was his environment.

Paul derived many important elements of his thinking from his environment. Anything from this environment which became a part of his experience and enriched his conception of Christianity was accepted as truth, and everything which contradicted his experience was rejected and condemned. He used for the purpose of illustration, and in a manner that was natural to him, the Grecian games, and these were an abomination to the Jews. There is so much in common between Paul and some of the Greek philosophers that many scholars think Paul must have been influenced by their writings. There is so much similarity between Paul and Seneca, who were contemporaries, that many writers have felt that one must have been influenced by the other. It is more probable, however, that both were influenced by the spirit of their age, and that they were independent of each other. Paul believed the Gentile world had received truth, and he also believed this truth had come from God.

Paul was influenced in his terminology by the life and thought of the world in which he lived. There are many significant expressions in his writings that were the common property of the age. These expressions were used, not only by the philosophers and religious teachers, but by the great mass of common people as well. These terms expressed in a general way the religious convictions of all, but each one put his own content into them. They did not mean the same for all groups. Paul had lived in this world so long, and had come into such vital touch with it, that this terminology had become his, and as his converts were familiar with it, he could best express himself by using it. His experience guided him in the use which he made of this terminology, and consequently he put a new content into much of it.

Anathemas, like that which Paul pronounced upon those who love not the Lord (I Cor. 16:22) were common in his day.<sup>8</sup> The curse which Paul commanded the Corinthians to pronounce upon the fornicator was common in the thought of the Graeco-Roman world, and without any further explanation, the Corinthians would understand what he meant for them to do. Paul's earnest desire to have the thorn removed from his flesh (II Cor. 12:8) is duplicated by Greek inscriptions. There is a similar expression in an inscription by M. Julius Apellas indicating his cure at the shrine of Asculapius at Epidaurus: "And concerning this thing I besought the god."<sup>9</sup>

It is quite likely that Paul was influenced by the thought of the Graeco-Roman world in his discussion of the struggle between the flesh and the spirit. The Platonist regarded the body as evil, believed the soul was imprisoned in it, and that it was contaminated by this imprisonment. Paul must have been familiar with their beliefs, for the philosophers had proclaimed their doctrines upon the street corners, and the common people heard them frequently. Paul's inheritance from the thought of his day was modified by his own experience, and hence he sometimes put a content into the terms which he used which was foreign to the thought of the Greeks. He argued that while sin dwells in the flesh the flesh can be overcome, and the body can be made the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. He argued that instead of the body being the instrument of sin, it can be consecrated to God, and can be made the instrument of righteousness.

Paul was influenced by the thought of the Graeco-Roman world in his conception of the Christian mysteries. In the mystery-cults there were certain secrets which were revealed to the initiated, but those who had not passed through the initiation were not permitted to know these secret mysteries. These mysteries played a prominent part in the thought of the Graeco-Roman world. Those to whom these mysteries had been revealed were greatly influenced by them. The possession of them was the key to a new life, and it was the pledge of immortality. Paul must have been familiar with these mysteries before he became a Christian, and his missionary activities had brought him into close touch with them. He spent much time in Ephesus, and Ephesus was one of the centers of the mystery-cults. He spent much time in

<sup>8</sup> Adolf Deissman (*Licht vom Osten*, 1906, p. 219; Eng. trans. 1910, p. 305) quotes the epitaph from Halicarnassus which is very similar: "If any man shall attempt to take away a stone . . . let him be accursed."

<sup>9</sup> See *Licht vom Osten*, 1906, p. 223; Eng. trans., 1910, pp. 310 f.

Corinth, and the Mysteries of Eleusis were celebrated on the road over which he must have passed when he went from Athens to that city. It is significant that Paul designated what he was imparting to those who were able to receive it as the divine mystery. He said he and his co-laborers were "stewards of the mysteries of God" (I Cor. 4:1). He said the man, speaking in a tongue, is speaking mysteries in the Spirit (I Cor. 14:2). He referred to the resurrection as a mystery which he was going to make known to them (I Cor. 15:51). He regarded the doctrine of the partial rejection of Israel, for the purpose of bringing in the fullness of the Gentiles and then the salvation of Israel, as a mystery (Rom. 11:25). Paul evidently regarded these mysteries as being well worth knowing, but he said, if a person should know all mysteries, but not have love, it would profit him nothing (I Cor. 13:2). Paul felt he was speaking "a wisdom not of this world"; it was "God's wisdom in a mystery"; it was "the wisdom that hath been hidden, which God fore-ordained before the worlds." The rulers of this world did not know this wisdom, for if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. This "wisdom in a mystery" was something which the eye saw not, and the ear heard not; it was something which had not entered into the heart of man, but it had been revealed by God through the Spirit. Paul said he revealed this mystery only to them that were full-grown. The natural man is not able to receive these things, because they must be spiritually judged. These things can be received only by him who is spiritual (I Cor. 2:6-10).

It is significant that Paul designated these deeper, spiritual truths, which he was revealing to those who were able to receive them, as divine mysteries; and that he used the same terminology as did the mystery-cults to designate those who were able to receive the mysteries, and those who were not able to receive them. Those who were capable of receiving the divine wisdom were the spiritual, or the perfect, the *τέλεος*; while those who were not capable of receiving it were the uninitiated, or the *ἰδιώτης*. Although Paul used the terminology that was current in his day, he sometimes put a Christian content into it, and this new content was the result of his own experience. The mystery which he revealed was the result of his own relation to Christ, and he regarded this as the message of the Spirit, and he felt that only those who were living the spiritual life were worthy to receive it.

Paul was influenced, in his conception of the union of the believer with Christ, by the thought of the Graeco-Roman world. The mystery-cults had an initiatory rite which was in the nature of a baptism. This

was supposed to bring the initiated into fellowship with the deity. They also had a sacred meal which enabled the one who participated in it to partake of the deity. It was believed in the Dionysus-cult that, by eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the victim in which the god was supposed to be incarnate, the life of the god entered into the individual. It seems almost certain that Paul was influenced in his conception of the ordinances of the church by these Greek ideas. He taught that the individual is baptised into Christ, and thus puts on Christ. The Corinthians were baptising for their dead, and Paul did not condemn the practice. He taught that the cup is a communion of the body of Christ. He told the Corinthians that many of them were sickly, and some of their number had died, because they had partaken without discerning the Lord's body. Paul had that thought of communion with the deity in mind, when he admonished the Corinthians not to participate in idol-worship, for the Gentiles sacrifice to demons, and not to God, and he did not want the Christians to have communion with demons. The Gentiles believed they had fellowship with the deity when they partook of the feast held in the temple of the deity. Paul accepted their belief, but he said it was with demons that they in reality had fellowship, because he regarded the pagan deities as demons.

Under the influence of the Greek mysteries Paul transformed the primitive conception of baptism into a mystical death and burial which unites one to Christ; and he transformed the primitive conception of a fellowship meal into a communion with the body and blood of Christ. His own Christian experience, however, guided him in the new content which he put into these ordinances. He connected faith with these mystic rites in a very vital manner. The one who is baptized has faith in Christ, and it is faith along with baptism which unites one to his Lord. The one who comes to the sacred meal is united to Christ by faith, and when he discerns the Lord's body and blood that faith is strengthened. Paul put a Christian content into these sacred rites, but he still regarded them as mysteries which brought the worshipper into vital relationship with the Master.

The thought of the Graeco-Roman world influenced Paul in his conception of the possession of the Spirit. The one who was initiated into the mysteries was brought into such close fellowship with the deity that the deity sometimes took possession of him. The one who was possessed by the deity had various ecstatic experiences, such as speaking with tongues, and being carried out of one's self. The Corinthian Christians, under the influence of the Spirit, spoke with tongues,

and did various other things which were peculiar to those who were acting under the Spirit's power. Paul recognized these phenomena as being similar to the ones witnessed among the pagans, the main difference being that the Christians were possessed by the divine Spirit while the pagans were possessed by demons. The attitude of the individual towards Jesus determined whether he was possessed by a good or an evil spirit. Although Paul was influenced in his conception of the indwelling Spirit by the thought of the Greek world, yet there are vital differences between his thought and that of the Greek mysteries. The ecstatic manifestations were fundamental in the Greek mysteries, but they were only incidental for Paul, and he urged that these should be subordinated to the manifestations that helped others. While the life and thought of the Graeco-Roman world helped to determine Paul's experience of spirit-possession, yet his whole experience as a Christian modified this and made it very different from what it was for a Greek.

Paul did not accept everything which was presented to him by his environment; if he had done this he would have been a pagan. Paul opposed much of the life and thought of the Mediterranean world; he regarded it as pagan and believed it was contrary to the will of God. He may have been unconscious of the fact that he had taken over any of the Greek ideas, for they had become a part of his experience, and he accepted them without being concerned as to the source from which he had derived them. Whatever there was in the life and thought of the Greeks which became a part of Paul's experience was accepted by him as truth, and anything which was foreign to his experience was rejected by him. It is very evident that experience was the standard according to which Paul evaluated the life and thought of the world in which he lived, and inasmuch as his Christian experience was interpreted as a following of the leading of the divine Spirit, he believed his conclusions had the sanction of the Spirit.

#### THE RELATION OF EXPERIENCE TO THE LIFE AND THOUGHT OF THE CHURCH INTO WHICH HE ENTERED

When Paul entered upon his Christian career he had the heritage of primitive Christianity, and he undoubtedly took up much of this primitive Christian thought. There is no reason for believing that he did not, either directly or indirectly, derive from the primitive Christian group the facts and doctrines which he held in common with them. The importance which he attached to primitive Christian tradition can best be discussed under two heads, the importance of the life and teach-

ings of Jesus, and the importance of the life and thought of the primitive Christian community.

### *The Life and Teachings of Jesus*

During the time when Paul preached and wrote, the teachings of Jesus and the story of his life were being handed down in oral form, but there were perhaps some written documents in addition to the oral traditions, and Paul must have gained his knowledge of the historical data of the life of Jesus from these sources.

Paul sometimes quoted the teachings of Jesus as final authority. In establishing his right to claim support from the churches where he was laboring, he stated, as the climax of his argument, the fact that Christ had ordained it. Just as God had ordained that those who minister in the temple should live of the temple, so Christ had ordained that those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel. Perhaps the order of Paul's argument indicates the importance which he attached to the various elements. That which was fundamental to him was his own sense of right, and to prove this he arranged his argument in the order of importance. He first used illustrations from life, and he then called attention to the fact that support was commanded by the Old Testament. This sense of right, which was supported by illustrations from life and by the commandment of the Old Testament, was also commanded by the Lord himself; and it is evident that he regarded this commandment as final authority.

In comforting the Thessalonians who were troubled about the loss which their Christian dead would sustain at the coming of Christ, Paul wrote with assurance. He said those who were alive at the coming of Christ would not precede them that are asleep, and he said he was making this statement by the word of the Lord. He must have had in mind some traditional statement about the Parousia which he accepted as having come from Jesus, and he regarded it as final authority, and he felt that it should remove all the doubts of the Thessalonians.

In his discussion of marriage Paul gave definite commandment concerning some phases, and he said he was expressing the commandment of the Lord on these matters; but concerning other phases he gave his own opinion, and he called attention to the fact that he did not have any commandment of the Lord covering these points. One must have the feeling when he reads the seventh chapter of I Corinthians that Paul spoke more positively, when he knew some teaching of Jesus that covered the point at issue, than when he was merely expressing his own

conviction. On the question of the remarriage of those who had separated from their companions Paul spoke with decision, for he was stating the commandment of the Lord. He evidently knew some teaching of Jesus that covered that point. But on the question of the marriage of virgins he did not have any commandment of the Lord, and so he expressed his own opinion, as one that had obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.

Paul urged the Galatians to fulfill the law of Christ by bearing one another's burdens, and it is very evident that it was Christ's law of love to which he referred. It seems that Christ's law of love was made prominent in the early church. In II John (v. 5) there is a reference to the commandment which they had from the beginning that they should love one another, and in James (3:8) the command to love one another is called "the royal law." Christ's law of love was made fundamental in the writings of Paul. It was the principle which was to guide man in his relation to others. This law was absolute and the Christian was to be controlled by it. He was to be guided by it in his treatment of the erring brother. He was to be guided by it in his use of spiritual gifts. He was to do only those things which would edify others. He was to be guided by this law in his eating. If eating meat would cause a brother to stumble, he should refrain, for a Christian would not be walking according to love, if he should do anything to offend a weaker brother.

In the few passages cited above Paul emphasized the teachings of Jesus, but the ultimate authority for him was not what Jesus said or did. His own experience of the living Christ was of more consequence to him than his knowledge of the Christ of the past. He was following the leading of the glorified Christ whom he had come to know at the time of his conversion, and he had become so vitally united to the Master through faith that he was living within him. Because he had Christ's Spirit he knew his will, and he insisted on obedience to this will. If he knew some teaching of Jesus that would serve his purpose in emphasizing the conviction to which he had come through experience, he used it; but he does not seem to have looked for such teaching, or to have been anxious about it. His chief concern was to know God's will, and the teaching of Jesus was one of the means through which that will was expressed.

#### *The Primitive Christian Community*

Many of Paul's doctrines were derived from the primitive Christian community. Before his conversion he had regarded the members of

this primitive Christian group as deluded fanatics. He had believed they were opposed to God, and he had felt he was doing God's will when he was persecuting them. He had learned much about the beliefs of the Christians from those whom he was persecuting, but his attitude had been one of opposition. His conversion changed everything, and in the light of this new experience, he realized that the Christians were right and that he was the one who was opposing God. He undoubtedly accepted their traditions and their conception of the Christian life as the basis of his own thinking, but many influences combined with his own experience of the Christian life to vitally change many of these conceptions.

Before his conversion Paul had heard about Jesus from the primitive Christians, but he did not believe their statements. His own experience, however, convinced him that they were right in their claims, and from Peter and others he learned more about the Master whom he had come to love. He accepted their statements about Jesus as true, and they became the basis of his new conception of Christ. But there were other elements which entered into Paul's thinking; hence the Christology of his writings is very different from that which he inherited from the primitive Christians; his Christology is peculiarly his own. This primitive Christian tradition, with his Jewish inheritance and the thought of the world in which he lived, were combined in the mold of his own experience, and the result was his conception of the pre-existent Christ, and of the glorified and exalted Christ, who is the head of the church, and who dwells in them who are united to him by faith.

Paul received from the primitive Christian group the conception of the church which was current at that time, with its simple organization and its ordinances. Under the influence of his own experience, or under the leading of the divine Spirit as he interpreted it, there was developed such a new conception that many have regarded Paul as the real founder of the church. There was developed such a new conception of the ordinances that many claim Paul as the originator of these ordinances.

The vital question for Paul when he had to face some new situation was not to know what the primitive Christians thought or did; it was not even to find out what Jesus said on the point at issue; it was rather to seek to follow the leading of the divine Spirit, and under the guidance of the Spirit, as he interpreted it, the church developed to meet new conditions.

## CONCLUSION

Paul lived a real life in a real world. He did not live in a tight compartment so that he could not be touched by the influences of the world about him, and could thus be made the passive instrument of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit did not so dominate him that he was immune to the influences of the life and thought of his age. His mind and heart were receptive to helpful impressions, regardless of the source from which they came. To attempt to understand Paul apart from the world in which he lived is to undertake the impossible. To put Paul in his world and interpret him in connection with the life and thought of his age is to understand him. The former method would make Paulinism static and mechanical; the latter would make it growing and vital. The former would make Paulinism a system according to which the church of all time is to conform; the latter would exalt the Christian spirit, as it found expression in Paul's life and thought, and it would understand that it was dressed in a Jewish garb which was modified by the Mediterranean world of the first century, and it would not feel obligated to make all ages conform to that particular dress. The former would make Paulinism a static norm; the latter would make it a living guide.

Religion was for Paul a constant development; it could not have been otherwise if he lived a real life in a real world. He was born in a Jewish home, raised in a Gentile city, and educated in a rabbinical school, and his conception of Judaism must have been constantly changing, even before he had heard of Jesus. He came into contact with Christianity and assumed the rôle of a persecutor, and his experiences with this new religion shook his confidence in the old faith. This prepared him for the great soul struggle, which he interpreted as the revelation of Christ in him. This, however, was only the beginning of his Christian experiences. His contact with the religious thought of the Graeco-Roman world modified his thinking along many lines, and the gigantic task of establishing Christianity, which had its origin in Palestine, throughout the Gentile world led him to a new evaluation of his beliefs. All these influences helped to constitute Paul's experience, and what was true to his experience at any particular time was the thing that was vital to him. Anything which he inherited from Judaism,

or which came to him from the life and thought of the world in which he lived, or from the primitive Christian group into which he entered, that became a part of his experience, was accepted as truth. Anything demanded by the great purpose which he had before him became a part of his experience and was also accepted as truth. Paul realized that his life was constantly united with Christ, and he interpreted his experience as the leading of the divine Spirit. That being true, his real authority was Christ within.

Inasmuch as Paul's experience was constantly changing, his standard of authority was not something static; it was a developing standard. His Christ within was a growing Christ. In the light of his changing experiences, he constantly reread the Old Testament and put a new valuation on his inheritance from Judaism and from the life and thought of his world. His aim was to forget the things which are behind, and to stretch forward to the things which are before, and to "press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

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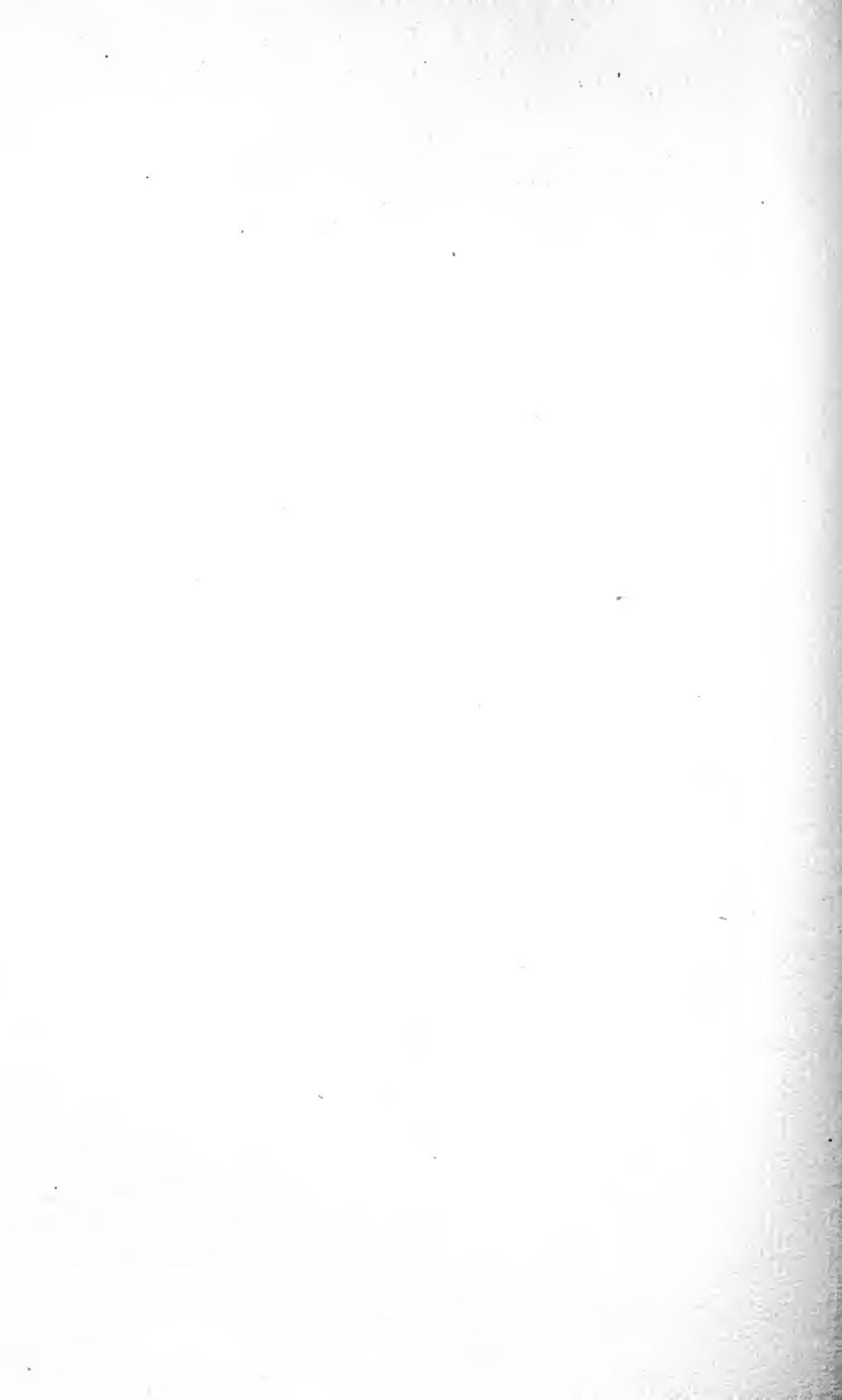
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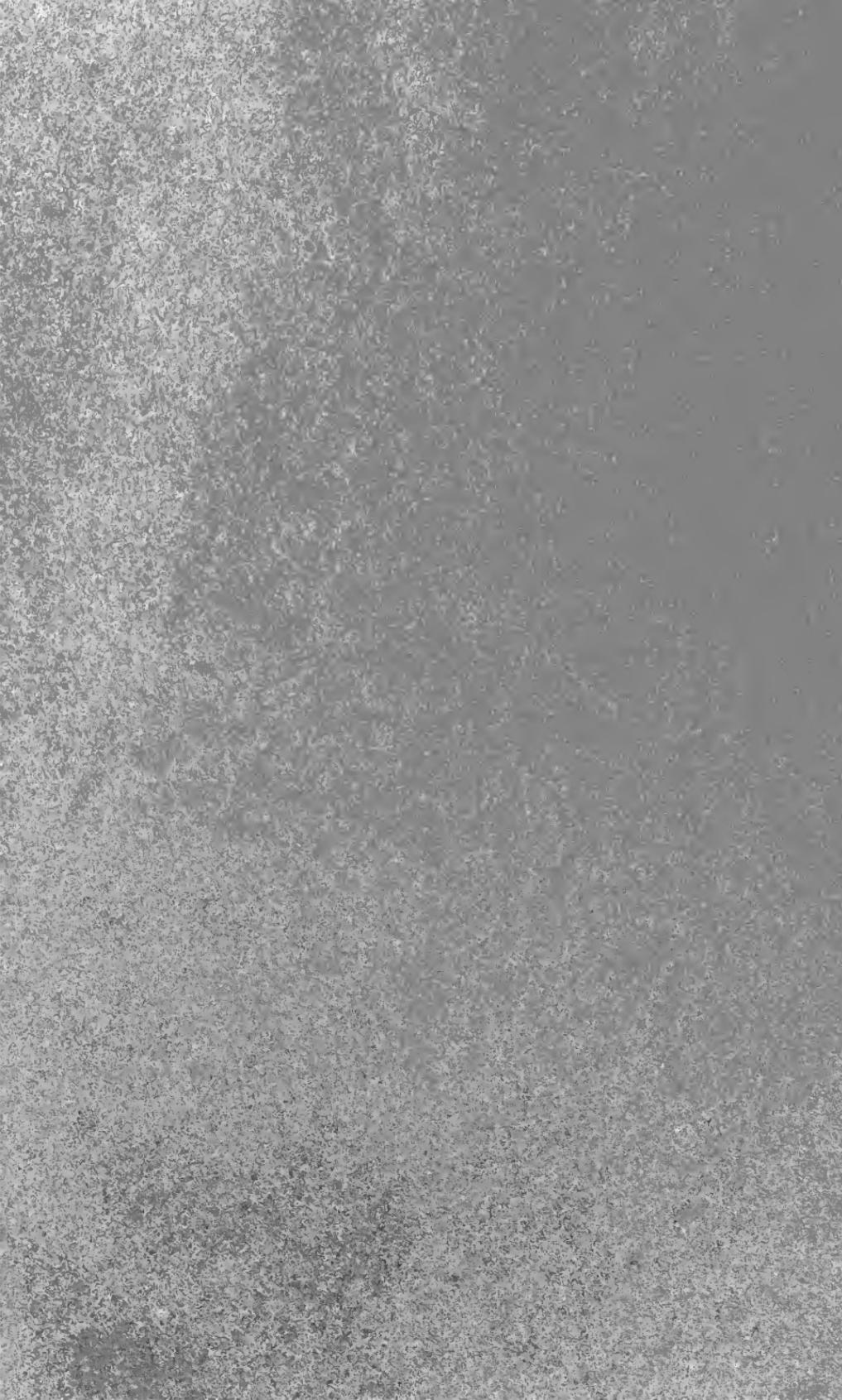












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